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weeks after, the camp was attacked by the Chippeways. They were repulsed, but Toskatnay, and he only, was killed.

‘No stone tells where he lies, nor can any of the Dahcotahs shew the spot. His deeds are forgotten, or at best, faintly remembered; thus showing “on what foundation stands the warrior’s pride;” but his wife still lives in the memory of her people, who speak of her by the name of Weenokhenschah Wandeteekah, or the Brave Woman.’

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ART. X.—*The Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man.* By Dugald Stewart. 2 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh. 1828.

The name of Dugald Stewart is one of the few, which, of late years, serve to relieve in part the character of the mother country from the charge of a comparative neglect of the great sciences of intellectual and moral philosophy. His writings upon these all-important subjects, if not the most powerful, are perhaps the most engaging in form, and consequently the most attractive to the general reader, in the language. In the works of the late Dr. Parr, we find a complimentary note addressed to Stewart, in which he is described as superior, for the union of fine taste and deep thought, to all other writers since the time of Bacon. This eulogy partakes of the exaggeration, which habitually marked the manner of the great Hellenist. Various writers, posterior to Bacon, might be mentioned, who combined with at least an equal command of language a higher power of original thinking, as, for instance, Shaftsbury, Berkeley, Hume, Burke, and Adam Smith. But none of these or of the others, who might fairly be considered as belonging to this class, with the exception perhaps of Hume, have pretended to give us a complete body of intellectual and moral science; and the remark of Parr, if considered as limited to such as have done this, might be received as substantially true. Locke, with a much superior power of thought, and with a plain, manly, and substantially good style, wants taste and elegance, and is undoubtedly, on the whole, much less attractive. Hume was perhaps superior in taste as well as natural acuteness and sagacity to Stewart; but such were the strange aberrations of his intellect, when applied to the study of metaphysics and morals,

that his works on these subjects have little or no value, excepting as curious indications of the progress of learning, and of its state at a particular period. Reid, the founder of the Edinburgh school, was deficient in the graces of manner, which belonged to his pupil, who is, therefore, on the whole, at present, and will probably long remain, among English authors, the most popular professor of moral science.

The praise of exhibiting, with taste and elegance, the results of a somewhat limited power of thinking, may perhaps appear, at first view, to be not very high ; but when we look through the history of learning, and remark with what economy intellectual gifts of the highest order have been always imparted to our race, we shall not be disposed to consider it as too scanty. To strike out new and entirely original ideas on abstract subjects, implies an intense exercise of thought, which may almost be supposed to preclude the cultivation of the arts and graces that belong to manner. Nor is it, in fact, in the communication of these original thoughts, as they first present themselves, in their native simplicity, to the mind of the discoverer, that the graces of manner can be displayed to the greatest advantage. It is chiefly in the illustration, application, and development of the great discoveries which enlarge the sphere of science, that we recognise the peculiar province of the powerful and elegant philosophical writer. Without possessing the vigor and persevering activity of mind required for actual invention, he is able, by his somewhat limited power, to comprehend the results of a higher one, and spread them out in pleasing forms before the eye of the common observer. And it often happens that in so doing he appropriates to himself a glory, which belongs much more properly to the inventor. In fact, the praise we allow to Stewart is the same which is usually given to the greatest philosophical writers of ancient and modern times. Aristotle, Xenophon, Plato, and Cicero built up their elegant productions in a great measure out of the materials supplied by the original mind of Socrates, who himself wrote nothing. Aristotle, the most powerful and original thinker among them, is also the one who excels least as a writer. He is dry, hard, and often obscure. He evidently neglected and despised the graces of style. It is true that Cicero, with the generous prodigality of praise, which he was always ready to extend to merit in others, as well as in himself, describes the writings of the Stagyrite as *a river of*

*flowing gold*. But he probably intended to allude to the continued richness and solidity of the substance rather than to any supposed brilliancy or beauty of form, which they certainly do not possess. In Xenophon, Plato, and himself, the power of original thought is evidently secondary to that of language. By comparing the works of the two former, and even by mere internal evidence, we can easily perceive where Plato follows in the track of his master, and where he strikes out a new one for himself. In the former case he is natural, simple, powerful, and true; in the latter, very often feeble, visionary, and false: as, for instance, in the *Republic*, the most unnatural, incoherent, and even inhuman plan of a political society that was ever devised, and one which offers a singular contrast in every line with the good sense, sagacity, and gentleness of Socrates, the Franklin of the ancient world. Cicero never fails in this way because he makes no pretensions to the invention of an original system. He brings into view, in his charming dialogues, a group of sages and statesmen, appertaining respectively to the different prevailing sects of philosophy, and makes them detail in turn their peculiar views, always in his own graceful and splendid diction, which is in fact the river of flowing gold, that he has so incorrectly, if we suppose him to allude to style, described that of Aristotle to be;—exhibits a leaning to one side or the other, but seldom or never starts any new theories of his own. Such, in substance, although his works want the dramatic form, and are in other respects less highly colored and poetical, is the manner of Stewart. He also generally gives us, upon every important topic which he treats, an exposition, in his lucid and brilliant language, of the opinions of the principal writers; weighs the arguments in favor of their respective theories; inclines perhaps to one or the other, but generally leaves it to the reader to decide, and rarely, if ever, adds an entirely original suggestion. In giving this description of the character of his genius, it is by no means our intention to depreciate the value of his works. We have, on the contrary, expressly classed him with some of the most illustrious names in the history of learning. We have said that he breathes the same inspiration with the divine Plato, and that his academic gown was of like texture with the ‘radiant robes of immortal Tully.’ This is praise enough to satisfy any moderate and well-regulated ambition. Nor, although we think, as we have said, that in him and them the powers of

imagination and expression predominate over that of close and vigorous thought,—that they were, in a word, poets rather than philosophers,—do we intend to intimate that the faculty of thought was wholly wanting, or present in their minds in a very low degree. To comprehend, enter into, appropriate and refine upon the inventions of creative genius, implies an intellectual power second only to that of creative genius itself; and when this is combined with a faculty of happy and luminous expression, it forms the combination of talents which is best fitted to produce effect upon the public mind, and procure for its possessor every sort of compensation and distinction, excepting perhaps the barren laurel of remote and posthumous glory,

— ‘that fancied life in others’ breath,  
The estate that wits inherit after death.’

The distinguishing characteristics of the talent and manner of Stewart being thus, as we have described them, of a nature to give his works a great popularity, and to enable him to exercise an extensive influence upon public opinion, it is not less fortunate for the world, than creditable to himself, that they are inspired throughout by the purest and most amiable moral feelings. We are acquainted with no philosophical writings in any language which leave upon the mind a happier impression. The principles which he sets forth upon the most important points in the theory of ethics are, in our opinion, far from being in all cases true, as we shall presently have occasion to show; but the tone of sentiment is uniformly pure; and as it is this which determines the general effect of the whole upon the opinions and feelings of the mass of readers, it follows of course that this effect is uniformly good. This amiable writer has in fact breathed into all his works the kind, gentle, social, and benevolent spirit by which he was himself animated. He not only teaches us to believe in virtue, but brings the celestial vision before us in full loveliness and beauty, so as to engage our affections in her favor. He adopts and defends all the liberal and philanthropic notions that have ever been advanced by the lovers of mankind, while he avoids at the same time the excesses by which injudicious partisans have so often brought, and are still bringing, the best of causes into contempt and ridicule. He is pious without fanaticism,—cheerful and benevolent without an approach to licentiousness. He is devotedly attached to liberty without deeming it neces-

sary to renounce his respect for social order and good government. He believes in the practicability of improvement without indulging in the idle dream of an earthly millennium. It had happened by a sort of fatality that almost all the works on moral philosophy, at least in modern times, which were written in an agreeable and attractive style, had inculcated principles not only false in themselves, but completely subversive of the good order of society. Helvetius, and the other French sophists of the eighteenth century, had presented their detestable doctrines in the dress of the sweetest and most seductive language, and had introduced it by this means into the brilliant saloons of fashion and even the boudoirs of the ladies. Hume, in like manner, had disguised his still more fatal, because more subtle poison, under one of the most chaste, correct, and elegant forms, that the English language has ever assumed. Even Darwin, and the other writers of the British materialist school of *vibrations* and *vibratiuncles*, the most pitiful and contemptible, perhaps, that has yet appeared in the philosophical world, tricked themselves out in a gaudy and fantastic sort of masquerade habit, which was singularly enough mistaken at the time for something highly graceful and attractive. Paley, a dignitary of the church, had lent the charm of a lucid and pleasing exposition, as well as the authority of his calling and the cloak of religion, to a system of absolute selfishness. In the meantime, the better opinions, if advanced at all, had been maintained, in a dry and heartless manner, in treatises for the most part devoid alike of depth and elegance. Under these circumstances we regard it as a singularly fortunate thing that a writer should have appeared, who, adopting a system of intellectual and moral philosophy in the main judicious, free from danger even in its errors, and inspired by a uniformly pure, amiable, and elevated moral feeling, should have been able at the same time to interest the world and give his notions a general popularity by the beauty of his language. The works of such a writer were absolutely necessary to prepare the way for that complete reformation of the theory of moral science which is so much needed. They want, it is true, the strong originality of thought, the rigorous correctness of reasoning, the nervous precision of language, which would be required for effecting this great object, but they possess the qualities that were proper for bringing about a favorable change in the state of public sentiment on these momentous subjects. They

are like the voice of one crying in the wilderness. They prepare the way for the coming of a still greater teacher, and collect an audience previously well disposed to listen to and profit by his instructions. At the same time, by creating a general interest in favor of the science and thus leading many persons to study it with correct prepossessions, they tend to produce the reformer whose success they prepare and facilitate. Such are the great services which the writings of Stewart have rendered and are rendering to the cause of truth and virtue. They are sufficient to entitle him forever to the respect and gratitude of all good men.

We shall probably be favored at no distant period with a collection of the works of Stewart accompanied by a full biography, which will afford us a more suitable occasion for entering into a general examination of his literary and philosophical character. We shall confine ourselves chiefly at present to an analysis of the work immediately before us; but it may not be an improper introduction to the remarks we shall offer on that subject to notice very briefly the author's preceding publications.

Mr. Stewart's original intention, in coming before the world as a writer, appears to have been to publish successively complete treatises on Metaphysics, or, as he preferred to say, the Philosophy of the Mind, on Ethics and on Politics, founded probably on the courses of lectures, which, in his capacity of professor, he delivered to his pupils upon these subjects. This intention is announced in the preface to the first volume of the *Elements of the Philosophy of the Mind*; but seems to have been completely executed only in reference to that particular branch. The notes, which formed the text-book of the ethical course, were published as early as the year 1793, under the title of *Outlines of Moral Philosophy*, but without much development; and the work now before us, which is another edition of the same matter in a more enlarged form, appears nevertheless to be the result of a less thorough and careful revision than that which had been given to the metaphysical course for the purpose of forming the *Philosophy of the Mind*. The lectures on Government have not appeared in any form, and if they come out at all, it can only be under the great disadvantages attending a posthumous publication. We regret this circumstance the more, because we think that since the appearance of the great work of Locke, standard treatises on ethics and on

politics are much more wanted in our language than one on metaphysics. A volume of *Philosophical Essays*, and the *Dissertations on the History of Moral Philosophy*, prefixed to the volumes of the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, complete the list of our author's publications. He is, therefore, one of the least voluminous, although he may perhaps be fairly regarded as, on the whole, the most eminent and valuable writer of his time. His example seems to corroborate the wholesome truth, already demonstrated by a hundred others, that a writer gains much more, even on the score of mere reputation, by maturing his works, than by hurrying constantly to press, in the vain expectation of securing the public attention by keeping his name forever in the newspapers.

The work on the *Philosophy of the Mind* is undoubtedly the most elaborate and finished of our author's productions—the one by which he has been hitherto best known, and which will probably contribute, more than any of, or all the rest, to his future reputation. It is much the most popular and elegant treatise on the subject in the English language, and has conveyed instruction and rational entertainment to whole classes of readers, who would never have thought of advancing beyond the first pages of Locke. When examined simply with reference to principles, and as an exposition of the theory of the science, it is doubtless far from being thorough or completely satisfactory. The Edinburgh school of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, of which Reid was the founder, and Stewart one of the principal ornaments, arose, as is well known, about the middle of the last century, in consequence of the reaction of public opinion against the sceptical systems, which had previously obtained a temporary vogue. In a late article on Intellectual Philosophy we briefly stated the leading principles of this school, as well as those of the Transcendental, or Critical Philosophy, which grew up in Germany, under the operation of the same causes, at about the same time. The great object of the founders and partisans of both was to refute the arguments by which the sceptics, reasoning on the principles of Locke, attacked the commonly received opinions in religion and morals; and the method of defence, which they adopted, was the one that is called, in the common-law forms of pleading, a confession and justification. They admitted the correctness of the reasoning of the sceptics, but undertook to show, on other grounds, that the conclusions they drew from it



could not be true. They gave up Locke to his adversaries, in the persuasion that they had found better arguments than his, in favor of the principles which he and they alike desired to support. The Scotch, by an appeal to common sense, and the Germans, by what they considered a more profound analysis of the intellect, conceived that they had given to the great and salutary truths of religion a much higher degree of certainty than they could derive from the doctrines of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. We have already stated in a concise way on the occasion just alluded to, our opinion of the value of these discoveries in metaphysics, and it is not our present purpose to enter more fully into the discussion. We are for ourselves, as we then remarked, fully satisfied with those parts of the theory of Locke, which the Scotch and Germans thought it necessary to abandon ; and we do not conceive that they lead to the irreligious and immoral conclusions which the sceptics drew from them. We are also of opinion that the ground taken by the partisans of the new schools was not in either case tenable ; and confining ourselves for the present entirely to the Scotch, that an appeal to common sense in proof of any abstract principle, instead of serving as a foundation for a new philosophical system, is a tacit admission that philosophy is at fault. It is only saying in a rather more formal way, that although beaten in the argument, we are convinced against our will, and remain of the same opinion.

Considered as an attempt to reconstruct the whole edifice on a new and more solid basis than that of Locke, the Scotch Philosophy, including that of Stewart, must undoubtedly be regarded as a failure. The value of the writings of our author is not, however, so much affected by the essential vice in the reasoning of his master, as might have been expected. A very small portion of his works is devoted to the examination of leading principles, his main object being to explain and illustrate the operations of the several intellectual powers. The reality of these is admitted by all, however different may be their theories respecting the nature of the mind, and the origin of knowledge ; nor is there much dispute about the modes of their operation, as far as this can be ascertained at all and lies within the scope of human knowledge. In treating this subject, it was therefore only necessary to state facts that were generally known, or open to an easy and familiar observation, in a perspicuous and agreeable way ; and a task of this kind was

very well suited to the character of Stewart, who possessed in a high degree the talent of easy exposition and happy illustration. This work presents accordingly a distinctly-drawn and highly-colored picture of the region of intellect, adorned and diversified throughout with embellishments borrowed from the kindred domains of taste and moral philosophy. It is in fact the great charm of these productions, that they are not a mere dry developement of abstract principles, but free, flowing, learned, and elegant discourses on the facts and feelings, that make up the curious tissue of many-colored life.

Of the two volumes, the former is, we think, by far the most interesting, and we consider it in fact as the only one of his works, with the exception of the *Philosophical Essays*, which exhibits the author's talent in all its freshness and activity. Twenty years elapsed between the publication of the two volumes of the *Philosophy of the Mind*, and it is not unnatural to suppose that during this long period, and at the advanced age which he had attained before he began to publish, his faculties should have lost something of their elasticity. The trains of thought that occupy the first volume, are also those on which he most delighted to dwell, and which he was best fitted to follow out, and illustrate. After hurrying somewhat rapidly over the chapter on Perception, and the dark and deep problem of the origin of knowledge, which he hardly professes to have probed to the bottom, and in regard to which the philosophy of his school, as we have just had occasion to remark, is essentially defective and erroneous, he soon arrives in the flowery regions of Imagination and Memory, where he finds himself entirely at home, and evidently wantons in the full consciousness of the power of communicating pleasure as well as instruction. Illustrations poetical, historical, and philosophical, crowd from under his pen, and spread themselves out over his pages, with a fullness and brilliancy, that form a singular contrast to the simple conciseness of the earlier chapters. The second volume, which is wholly occupied by an examination of the faculty of *Judgment* or *Reason*, brings him back again to the colder regions of abstract elementary principles; and here, as if on purpose to heighten the natural dryness of his subject, he has drawn his illustrations principally from the still more abstract science of pure mathematics, with which he seems to be rather fond of showing his acquaintance. It was his original intention, as expressed in the preface to the first volume, to com-

press the remarks on the faculty of Judgment into a few chapters ; and we rather regret that he did not complete the work on this plan. In treating this branch of the subject, the essential defects of the Scotch philosophy are necessarily brought into view, and the more it is dwelt upon, the more obvious and visible do they become. The author no longer exhibits his former facility and freedom, and seems to labor under a feeling that there is some defect in his theory, without knowing exactly what it is, or where to find a remedy for it. He moves on from chapter to chapter, and from topic to topic, with a slow and embarrassed march, without appearing to have at any time a perfectly distinct notion of the principles he wishes to establish, and of course without imparting to the mind of the reader the conviction which he does not himself feel. We miss at once the easy lightness of style, which belonged to the other volume, and the masculine firmness and vigor of thought, which should have been the characteristics of this. In the hope of giving to his theories the precision which he seems to feel that they want, he is fond—as we remarked above—of recurring to illustrations drawn from pure mathematics. He probably entertained an indistinct notion, which has served as the basis to many extensive treatises on moral philosophy, that by applying to moral truths the language and form of mathematical demonstrations, he could give them the same sort of certainty which belongs to that science. This was the theory of Wolff, Doddridge, and various other well-meaning writers. Hutcheson has undertaken to express under the form of algebraic equations, the various degrees of moral value, that belong to different actions according to the various motives and circumstances under which they are performed. The principle is obviously completely visionary in the abstract, and when applied to practice leads to incongruities that border on the ludicrous. Stewart has by no means adopted it to any thing like the same extent as the writers to whom we have just alluded ; and has even noticed with just disapprobation this feature in their works. When he appeals to mathematics, it is merely for the purpose of illustration, but still, as it seems, with a persuasion that he was giving his principles a sort of mathematical certainty. The error is the same with that of Wolff and Hutcheson in a milder form. Considered as mere illustrations, mathematical forms and methods are plainly the last that should be employed to relieve the dryness of purely abstract

moral reasoning, since they can only increase the very evil they were intended to remedy. On the whole, although particular passages of the second volume may be read with great pleasure and instruction, the general impression which it leaves upon the mind is confused and incomplete. The author repeatedly refers us to his own future publications for further explanations on some of the most interesting topics that come up in the course of the inquiry ; and when we lay aside the volume, we do it with a feeling that we have received a good many valuable hints, but that we must inquire more of the author himself, and of others, before we can have a settled opinion upon the subject he has undertaken to treat. In the preface to the second volume, he speaks of a third, which he intended to publish, and of which the materials were then in a great measure prepared. The principal subjects allotted to it are, as he himself states—*Language—Imitation—the Varieties of Intellectual Character*, and the *Faculties by which Men are distinguished from the Lower Animals*. This volume was to have completed the work. Of these materials none, as far as we are informed, have yet been published ; but we venture to hope, that they will not be lost to the world. The subjects are of the class which Stewart was able to treat with the greatest advantage and success, and he would have had opportunity in discussing them to exhibit the same fertility of fancy and elegance of language, that distinguish his first productions. We trust that the essays in question, if at all in a finished state—as they apparently must be—will be published by the friends of the author in the collection of his posthumous writings.

The *Philosophical Essays* and the *Dissertations on the History of Philosophy*, are among the most agreeable and valuable of our author's writings. It would carry us too far from our immediate object to pretend to comment upon the various subjects, which are rapidly touched upon in these works. It is much to be regretted that Stewart did not live to complete the plan of the *Dissertations*. Without, perhaps, fully realising the idea of a perfect *History of Philosophy*, they might, in that case, have justly been considered as the most remarkable essay towards a work of this kind, to be found in any language. The learning, displayed by our author in these *Dissertations* and in his other writings, is extensive, and as far as it goes, uniformly thorough and exact. He is familiar in particular with classical and French literature. He attaches, we

think, rather too much importance to some continental writers of an inferior order, such as Buffier and Boscovich, who, judging from the effect of their works, can have had little or no real power, since they have made little or no impression on the feelings or opinions of the world. They were monks, who wrote in monkish Latin to beguile the tedium of the cloisters, and their fame has not yet extended, and probably never will extend much farther. The most remarkable deficiency in the erudition of Stewart is the want of an acquaintance with the language and philosophy of Germany. Germany is the country in which metaphysical and moral philosophy have been cultivated within the last half century with the greatest assiduity. The whole mass of ancient and modern learning connected with these subjects has there been explored, drawn out from its hiding-places in dusty libraries, and worm-eaten manuscripts, brought into view, examined, criticised, appreciated and employed. New systems and theories have been struck out, received with enthusiasm, controverted, established or abandoned, as the current of opinion happened to set. In short, there has been among the Germans a remarkably active movement in the cultivation of this branch of science: and if the success of their labors have not fully corresponded in the last result to the extent and vigor of their exertions, it is still highly important—we may say, absolutely necessary—for students in the same science in other parts of the world, and especially for the historian of philosophy, to know exactly the amount and value of what they have done. Mr. Stewart, from his want of acquaintance with the German language, in which almost all the works that have appeared within the period alluded to, are written, had no means of gaining information on the subject excepting from obscure and imperfect Latin translations of a few leading writers, and some other sources of a purely secondary and subsidiary class. He looks for example to Madame de Staël's *Allemagne* as an authority. The want of familiarity with the German philosophy was in his case the more to be regretted, inasmuch as that doctrine is founded substantially on the same principles with the one professed by himself, and may be viewed as another exposition of the same common creed. In Germany, however, the common creed has been expounded, illustrated, and pursued into its consequences, real or supposed, to a much greater extent than in Scotland, so that a disciple of Reid, when he

studies the philosophy of Germany, is examining his own principles, as it were through a magnifying glass, and, of course, with great advantages for rectifying his views upon every point connected with the subject. It is easy to perceive in the works of some of the contemporary French philosophers—particularly Cousin—the great advantages resulting from a diligent cultivation of German literature. But while we indicate this deficiency in the learning of Stewart, it is not our intention to impute much blame to him for it. He was already advanced in life, and involved in urgent engagements, when the philosophy of the Germans first began to attract notice in other parts of Europe. It was, probably, impossible for him, under these circumstances, to dispose of the time and labor that would have been required for a thorough investigation of the subject, and he was obliged to content himself with such imperfect notions of it as he could obtain in a different way. The result has been a distaste for, and perhaps a partially unjust appreciation of the Germans, together with a less thorough understanding of the real character of the principles of his own school, than he would probably have had if he had probed theirs to the bottom.

It is time, however, to come to the work more immediately before us. This is entitled *The Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man*, and is, of course, nothing less in purpose and design than a complete treatise on the great subject of *Ethical Science*. A standard work of this description is undoubtedly one of the principal *desiderata* in the literature of our language and of modern Europe. The work of Paley, which, for want of a better, has obtained a pretty extensive circulation both in England and in this country, though respectable in form and manner, is an exposition of an essentially false and immoral system, and of course leaves the field entirely open for another written on correct principles. Few persons could be found better fitted than Stewart by the popularity of his style, and the warmth and benevolence of his feelings, to produce a work that should arrest the public attention; and supposing it to possess the substantial qualities necessary for that purpose, should be received as the text-book of the science. We regret to say, that the one before us, though valuable and instructive when considered as an essay, does not appear to us to be of a nature to supply the deficiency to which we have alluded. It contains no new princi-

ples, nor is it sufficiently elaborate and complete to be viewed as a better statement of any theory that had been previously advanced by any other writer. The author hardly seems in fact to possess any settled ideas on the most important points in the science. In treating them, he appears to waver between different opinions, cites a variety of names and books, introduces many qualifications and conditions, and, finally, leaves it in a great measure uncertain what his own views are. The tone of feeling is so correct and amiable, and the style in general so attractive, that the work will be perused with great delight and profit by the general reader; but it will have, we think, little or no effect in fixing principles, or reforming the state of the science.

In the opening chapter of the work, the author states the distinction between the powers that belong to man on the one hand as an intellectual being, and on the other as an active and moral one; and then classes the latter, which form his immediate subject, under the two heads of *Instinctive* or *Animal* and *Rational* or *Governing* principles of action. To the former belong our *Appetites*, *Desires*, and *Affections*; to the latter, *Self-love*, and the *Moral Faculty*. The two first books are devoted respectively to the consideration of these two classes of powers or principles, under their respective subdivisions. The *Animal* or *Instinctive* principles are treated somewhat less fully than the *Rational*—it being, as the author himself remarks, the principal object of the volume to illustrate the nature of the *Moral Faculty*. In the third book, he takes up his general subject under a new point of view, and proposes to consider our practical duties under the common division of those which have for their object respectively the Deity, our fellow-men and ourselves. In treating the first of these classes of duties, he enters on a demonstration of the existence of God, which is by far the most elaborate portion of the work, and is indeed the only one which is finished with much fulness and care. It is worthy of remark, however, that this discussion is wholly foreign to the subject on the system of Stewart, who attempts to establish the theory of morals—as we shall presently show—on grounds entirely independent of religion. This inquiry occupies the whole of the third book. In the fourth, the author treats of the duties we owe to our fellow-creatures and ourselves, and finally, in the fifth and last he enters, somewhat late in the day, as it seems to us, on the

question of the nature of *Virtue*, which he discusses in a few short chapters, or rather sentences, forming, in our opinion, by far the most unsatisfactory part of the work. The appendix contains, with one or two other less important tracts, a copious and elaborate, though not very powerful essay on the controverted question of the *Free Agency of Man*. Such is the general outline of the contents of the two volumes.

The phraseology employed by our author in the classification and arrangement of his materials, which is borrowed with variations from that of Reid, is not particularly happy. By the *Active Powers of Man*, he means the principles or elements of our nature, which determine our actions; but there seems to be a pretty obvious departure from the natural and ordinary use of words, when we call *Hunger*, for example, or *Friendship*, an *Active Power*. *Active Principles*, which the author occasionally employs as a synonymous expression, is a more correct one; but even in this there is a departure from the usual application of the epithet *active*. The arrangement of these principles into the five classes mentioned above, is admitted by our author himself to be of no great importance. 'If I had been disposed,' says he, in a note upon the first chapter, 'to examine this part of our constitution with all the minute accuracy of which it is susceptible, I should have preferred an arrangement different both from that which I have adopted, and from that proposed by Dr. Reid.' He then proceeds to give the heads of this other arrangement, by which the active principles of our nature are divided into the two classes of *Original* and *Acquired*, and the former of these again into the sub-divisions of *Animal* and *Rational*. Whether the phrase *Acquired Principles* be not inconsistent in its terms, and the thing intended by it impossible in nature, is a question, which we need not stop to discuss. The author concludes the note by remarking, that for any of the purposes, which he has in view, it is useless to attempt so comprehensive and detailed an examination of the subject as the one to which he has alluded, and that he shall confine himself to the general enumeration given in the work. It is plain, therefore, that he does not regard the latter as a perfect one. The most simple and obvious arrangement of the principles of our nature, considered as furnishing motives of conduct,—the point of view under which they are regarded in morals,—is into the two classes of *Selfish* and *Social Principles*, to which must be added,



for those who believe in the reality of a distinct and separate power or sense, by which we recognise the moral qualities of actions, the *Moral Faculty*.

The *Appetites*, *Desires*, and *Affections*, which form the subject of the first book, are treated respectively under several sub-divisions, which are not, we think, made in every instance with remarkable correctness. Thus we find classed under the second head, as separate desires, the *Desire of Power*, and the *Desire of Superiority*; which, if not identical, border too nearly on each other to be regarded as distinct principles in our original constitution. It would be superfluous, however, to examine very minutely a classification, which the author himself admits to be loose and unsatisfactory to his own mind. The chapters on the affections are beautifully written, and are filled with generous and amiable sentiments. On *Love*, the most prominent and remarkable of the number, there is, however, no distinct essay. Our fair readers will be struck with consternation at such an omission, and will naturally inquire, with the Last Minstrel in the Lay of our author's illustrious countryman,

How could he to the dearest theme,  
That ever warmed a minstrel's dream,  
So foul, so false, so recreant prove ?

Mr. Stewart would perhaps have replied, that the theme was better suited to minstrels than philosophers. He disports himself with freedom and apparent satisfaction in the cooler regions of *Friendship* and *Patriotism*. We extract the chapter on the former subject, as an agreeable specimen of his manner in this part of the work. In the few observations which he makes upon the character of the *Instinctive Principles* of our nature, considered as motives to action, he distinctly states, that he does not regard even the *Benevolent* affections as *Virtuous*. This opinion is in accordance with his general theory, which we shall examine hereafter. In the mean time, we cannot but express our wonder, that his own excellent feelings should not have secured him against an error, so repulsive in itself, and so plainly reprobated by the common sense of the world.

‘ Friendship, like all other benevolent affections, includes two things; an agreeable feeling, and a desire of happiness to its object.

‘ Besides, however, the agreeable feelings common to all the exertions of benevolence, there are some peculiar to friendship. I before took notice of the pleasure we derive from communicating our thoughts and our feelings to others; but this communication, prudence and propriety restrain us from making to strangers; and hence the satisfaction we enjoy in the society of one, to whom we can communicate every circumstance in our situation, and can trust every secret of our heart.

‘ There is also a wonderful pleasure arising from the sympathy of our fellow-creatures with our joys and with our sorrows, nay, even with our tastes and our humors; but, in the ordinary commerce of the world, we are often disappointed in our expectation of this enjoyment; a disappointment which is peculiarly incident to men of genius and sensibility, superior to the common, who frequently feel themselves “alone in the midst of the crowd,” and reduced to the necessity of accommodating their own temper, and their own feelings, to a standard borrowed from those whom they cannot help thinking undeserving of such a sacrifice.

‘ It is only in the society of a friend, that this sympathy is at all times to be found; and the pleasing reflection, that we have it in our power to command so exquisite a gratification, constitutes, perhaps, the principal charm of this connexion. “What we call affection,” says Mr. Smith, “is nothing but a habitual sympathy.” I will not go quite so far as to adopt this proposition in all its latitude, but I perfectly agree with this profound and amiable moralist in thinking, that the experience of this sympathy is the chief foundation of friendship, and one of the principal sources of the pleasures which it yields. Nor is it at all inconsistent with this observation to remark, that, where the groundwork of two characters in point of moral worth is the same, there is sometimes a contrast in the secondary qualities of taste, of intellectual accomplishments, and even of animal spirits, which, instead of presenting obstacles to friendship, has a tendency to bind more strongly the knot of mutual attachment between the parties. Two very interesting and memorable examples of this, may be found in Cuvier’s account of the friendship between Buffon and Daubenton, and in Playfair’s account of the friendship between Black and Hutton.

‘ I do not mean here to enter into the consideration of the various topics relating to friendship, which are commonly discussed by writers on that subject. *Most* of these, indeed, I may say *all* of them, are beautifully illustrated by Cicero in the Treatise *de Amicitia*, in which he has presented us with a summary of all that was most valuable on this article of ethics in the writings of preceding philosophers; and so comprehensive is the

view of it which he has taken, that the modern authors who have treated of it, have done little more than to repeat his observations.

‘One question concerning friendship much agitated in the ancient schools was, “whether this connexion can subsist in its full perfection between more than two persons?” And I believe that it was the common decision of antiquity that it *cannot*. For my own part, I can see no foundation for this limitation, and I own, it seems to me to have been suggested more by the dreams of romance, or the fables of ancient mythology, than by good sense, or an accurate knowledge of mankind. The passion of love between the sexes is indeed of an exclusive nature; and the jealousy of the one party is roused the moment a suspicion arises that the attachment of the other is in any degree divided; and by the way, this circumstance, which I think is strongly characteristic of that connexion, deserves to be added to the various other considerations which show that monogamy has a foundation in human nature. But the feelings of friendship are perfectly of a different sort. If our friend is a man of discernment, we rejoice at every new acquisition he makes, as it affords us an opportunity of adding to our own list of worthy and amiable individuals, and we eagerly concur with him in promoting the interests of those who are dear to his heart. When we, ourselves, on the other hand, have made a new discovery of worth and genius, how do we long to impart the same satisfaction to a friend, and to be instrumental in bringing together the various respectable and worthy men whom the accidents of life have thrown in our way!

‘I acknowledge, at the same time, that the number of our attached and confidential friends cannot be great, otherwise our attention would be too much distracted by the multiplicity of its objects, and the views, for which this affection of the mind was probably implanted, would be frustrated by its engaging us in exertions beyond the extent of our limited abilities; and, accordingly, nature has made a provision for preventing this inconvenience, by rendering friendship the fruit only of long and intimate acquaintance. It is strengthened not only by the acquaintance, which the parties have with each other's personal qualities, but with their histories, situations, and connexions from infancy; and every particular of this sort which falls under their mutual knowledge forms to the fancy an additional relation, by which they are united. Men, who have a very wide circle of friends without much discrimination or preference, are justly suspected of being incapable of genuine friendship, and indeed are generally men of cold and selfish character, who are influenced chiefly by a cool and systematical regard to their own

comfort, and who value the social intercourse of life only as it is subservient to their accommodation and amusement.

‘That the affection of friendship includes a desire of happiness to the beloved object, it is unnecessary to observe. There is, however, a certain limitation of the remark, which occurs among the maxims of La Rochefoucault, and which has been often repeated since by misanthropical moralists, “that, in the distresses of our best friends, there is always something, which does not displease us.” It may be proper to consider in what sense this is to be understood, and how far it has a foundation in truth. It is expressed in somewhat equivocal terms; and I suspect, owes much of its plausibility to this very circumstance.

‘From the triumphant air with which the maxim in question has been generally quoted by the calumniators of human nature, it has evidently been supposed by them to imply, that the misfortunes of our best friends give us more pleasure than pain. But this La Rochefoucault has not said, nor indeed could a proposition so obviously false and extravagant have escaped the pen of so acute a writer. What La Rochefoucault has said, amounts only to this, that, in the distresses of our best friends, the pain we feel is not altogether unmixed;—a proposition unquestionably true, whenever we have an opportunity of soothing their sorrows by the consolations of sympathy, or of evincing, by more substantial services, the sincerity and strength of our attachment. But the pleasure we experience in such cases, so far from indicating any thing selfish or malevolent in the heart, originates in principles of a directly opposite description, and will be always most pure and exquisite in the most disinterested and generous characters. The maxim, indeed, when thus interpreted, is not less true when applied to our own distresses than to those of our friends. In the bitterest cup that may fall to the lot of either there are always mingled some cordial drops,—in the misfortunes of others, the consolation of *administering* relief,—in our own, that of *receiving* it from the sympathy of those we love.

‘Whether La Rochefoucault, in the satirical humor, which dictated the greater part of his maxims, did not wish, in the present instance, to convey by his words a little more than *meets the ear*, I do not presume to determine.’

The *Rational* or *Governing Principles* of our nature, which form the subject of the second book, are, in the system of Mr. Stewart, *Self-love* and the *Moral Faculty*. The former is despatched somewhat hastily in a single chapter, while the latter is treated more at large in the rest of the book. In considering the nature of *Self-love*, Mr. Stewart distinguishes it

from the instinctive principles, which have for their object the gratification of the senses, and describes it as a rational principle, which looks to the general well-being or happiness of the individual. The name *Self-love*, which has been given to this principle, is, as Mr. Stewart justly remarks, 'exceptionable, because it suggests an analogy, where there is none in fact, between that regard, which every rational being must necessarily have for his own happiness, and those benevolent affections which attach us to our fellow creatures.' *Love* is in fact an essentially *social* feeling, and the phrase *Self-love* is of course contradictory in terms. This is, however, a mere question of words. It is of more importance to remark, that the reality of any such distinct principle, as the author here designates under the name of *Self-love*, is perhaps extremely doubtful. It is, as he explains it, a *desire of happiness*. Now happiness is the state of general well-being, which results from the healthy exercise of all our natural powers and faculties. But we are led to the exercise of these powers and faculties by a variety of principles, some selfish and some social; all of which have for their immediate object, not the general result, happiness—but the attainment of some particular good, either for ourselves or others. Experience teaches us that our own happiness is promoted by seeking that of others; but we also find that this effect is not produced unless we seek the good of others from benevolent feeling, and without reference to any selfish motive. This fact is remarked by Mr. Stewart himself.

'The man,' says he, 'who is most successful in the pursuit of happiness is not he who proposes it to himself as the great object of his pursuit. To do so, and to be continually occupied with schemes on the subject, would fill the mind with anxious conjectures about futurity, and with perplexing calculations of the various chances of good and evil; whereas the man, whose ruling principle of action is a sense of duty, conducts himself in the business of life with boldness, consistency, and dignity, and finds himself rewarded with that happiness, which so often eludes the pursuit of those who exert every faculty of the mind in order to attain it.'

If then we had within us an instinctive desire of happiness, which is, as we have seen, an indirect result of the exercise of our social as well as selfish feelings, this desire would defeat its own purpose; since, as far as we acted in obedience to it,

we should deprive ourselves of the principal element of happiness, which consists in the exercise of disinterested benevolence. The supposition of a natural desire of happiness is, therefore, the supposition of a desire prompting to us a line of conduct, which prevents the attainment of the object by which this desire is to be gratified, and is obviously absurd. Happiness, instead of being, as the poet describes it, the 'end and aim of our existence,' is the indirect result of a conduct directed by higher views, and pursued without reference, and often in apparent or temporary opposition to our own immediate interest. All the active principles of our nature, when properly directed, concur in producing it; and these, as we have remarked, may be classed under the two heads of *selfish* and *social principles*; but if it were necessary to decide which of these tend most effectually in their exercise to promote happiness, the preference should undoubtedly be given to those of the latter class. The gratification of those desires, which end in self, is attended with temporary pleasure, but as respects our general and permanent well-being its effect is almost wholly negative. This depends in a great measure, if not entirely, on the exercise of social and benevolent affections—youthful love—conjugal, parental, and filial tenderness—charity, friendship, patriotism, and the expansive philanthropy that embraces the fortunes of the whole human race. The merely selfish pleasures are brief and transitory, followed by disgust, and accompanied by a secret shame: but these noble and amiable sentiments fill the soul with conscious satisfaction, and diffuse a cheerful and sunny light over the course of our existence.

Of the two *Rational* and *Governing* principles supposed by our author, the reality of the former, which he calls *Self-love*, is therefore extremely questionable. The other which he denominates the *Moral Faculty*, is treated at much greater length, and is evidently regarded as of far more importance. Mr. Stewart indeed, expressly states—as we have already remarked—that it is the principal object of the work to explain and illustrate the nature of this faculty. We propose to examine with some attention the view which he has taken of the subject, and shall perhaps in the sequel find reason to question the reality of this, as well as of the other principle, if considered as a distinct and independent part of our nature, and to conclude that the *Moral Faculty*, as far as it has any actual existence, is little more than another name for the same social and benevo-

lent affections, which we have just described as the chief sources of happiness, and which we also believe to be the most important elements of virtue.

In treating this part of his subject, Mr. Stewart observes the following method. He first examines and refutes the selfish system, which denies the reality of moral distinctions, and represents self-love as the only principle of action. In opposition to this theory, he establishes the doctrine that we have within us a principle or faculty of some kind, which distinguishes actions, without any reference to their operation upon ourselves, accordingly as they possess or want certain qualities, which we call *Moral*. What then is the nature of this principle, and of the quality in actions which corresponds with it, and brings it into exercise? After examining successively the opinions which refer the perception of moral qualities to the understanding, and to a distinct power called a *Moral Sense*, Mr. Stewart concludes that both these theories are true, and that we recognize moral distinctions at the same time by the understanding and the heart. On this supposition, it would appear more natural to speak of our *Moral Faculties*, than to use the term, as our author constantly does, in the singular number. What then is the nature of this distinction? or in other words, what is the precise meaning conveyed by the expressions *Right* and *Wrong*? Of this, says Mr. Stewart, we can give no account. The ideas we attach to these terms are simple and wholly unsusceptible of definition or explanation. We can only say of them, that the qualities they respectively indicate are approved and disapproved by our moral faculties. Lastly, what is the source of the obligation which we suppose ourselves to be under, to do what is right and abstain from what is wrong? In answering this question, our author rejects in succession the theories, which place the foundation of moral obligation in the will of God, and in the utility of virtue; and concludes in the end that it is absurd to ask the question, why we are bound to do right, since the idea of obligation is implied in that of virtue; that is, according to his definition, in the idea of an action, which is the subject of the approbation of conscience. Such is a brief sketch of the leading points of the theory of Mr. Stewart on this important topic. We proceed to offer some remarks upon each of its principal divisions.

I. That pleasure is the only good, the attainment of pleasure the only natural motive to action, and the tendency to give

pleasure the only distinguishing characteristic of the actions we call *virtuous*, are the leading principles of a creed in philosophy, which in all ages and nations has been practised upon to a very considerable extent by a portion of society, and has been at times professed as a theory, and received with a pretty general favor. These principles formed the basis of the system of Epicurus, which in the decline of the Roman Empire became the dominant opinion throughout the civilized world. The doctrine was revived in France by Gassendi, about two hundred years ago, and gaining ground very rapidly, became in the following century the prevalent belief of the higher classes in that country, from which it spread itself over the other parts of Europe until it assumed once more the imposing shape of the dominant opinion of the age. Its practical results were soon exhibited in the tremendous political revolutions which convulsed the world at the close of the eighteenth century. A vigorous offset from this tree of poison was planted in England, and for a time shot up and flourished with a good deal of luxuriance. The doctrine acquired indeed at that time and maintains up to the present day, a pretty strong hold on the public sentiment of the mother country, and is perhaps at this moment under some of its different modifications, the one most generally received by inquiring and thinking men. Whatever may be its merits or defects it has obviously no pretensions to novelty; and it is therefore not a little singular that it should have been announced in our own day, with great pomp and circumstance as a *new discovery*. The *Utilitarian* system is plainly nothing more than a new proclamation, with perhaps some slight variations in form, of the old Epicurean philosophy, which was always popular in England; which had been professed with a kind of fanaticism, and pushed to extravagance in France within half a century preceding; and which had been familiarly known for at least two thousand years, as one of the two leading opinions that had always divided the philosophic world. Mr. Bentham does not seem to be aware of any of these facts, and on the strength of having republished this ancient and venerable heresy under the barbarous title of the GREATEST HAPPINESS PRINCIPLE, very honestly believes himself to be the Newton of *Moral Science*. It is really a singular thing, that at a time when Paley was still in all the freshness of his popularity, any person of sound mind—we have, it is true, some doubts whether the Philosopher of



Queen Square can be fairly ranked in that category—should think of promulgating the *Utilitarian* theory as a brilliant novelty, and should even obtain followers enough to give him the appearance of being the founder of a school.

The leading argument in favor of this system, results from the fact that virtue is on the whole productive of pleasure and advantage to the individual. Self-interest, therefore, should naturally lead to the practice of it, and this motive being sufficient to account for the effect, it is unphilosophical to suppose the existence of any other. Hence utility or the tendency to give pleasure is the essence of virtue, and self-interest, that is, the love of pleasure, the only principle of action.

The objection to the system lies in the not less certain facts that we estimate the moral value of actions not according to their results, but according to the motives of the agents, that we are conscious of acting in many cases upon motives entirely foreign to any regard to our own pleasure or interest, and that actions which we should under other circumstances pronounce to be virtuous, lose their character and cease to be so, if we find that they were performed from selfish motives. Thus if I relieve a mendicant in the street, from a sentiment of charity, the action is virtuous ; but if I do it in such a way as to be ‘seen of men,’ and for that purpose, it is not only not virtuous, but actually vicious. On the *Utilitarian* scheme, the action ought in the latter case to be still more virtuous, than in the former, because it produces the same generally useful effects as before, with the additional advantage of promoting to a still greater extent the personal interest of the agent. Utility then, although it may be the result, is not the principle of virtue ; and self-interest, although in many cases a justifiable and virtuous motive of action, is by no means the only one.

These facts are not denied by the partisans of the selfish system, and the awkwardness of their attempts to account for them consistently with it, is a strong subsidiary argument against its truth. The feebleness of their reasoning on this head is particularly apparent in the case of Paley, one of the most intelligent, zealous, and popular professors of the system. Paley was a person of great directness and sincerity, conscious of the general purity of his intentions, and of a real respect for religion and morality. With this confidence in the uprightness of his own views, he felt no scruple about following his theories wherever they carried him. The only wonder is,

that his conclusions should not have had upon his own sound and clear understanding the effect, which they must have, we think, upon that of every intelligent reader, of a *reductio ad absurdum* of his leading principles, and brought him back to a different system. The statement to which we allude, and which is quoted by Mr. Stewart in the work before us, is as follows :

‘ There is always understood to be a difference between an *act of prudence* and an *act of duty*. Thus, if I distrusted a man who owed me a sum of money, I should reckon it an act of prudence to get another person bound with him, but I should hardly call it an act of duty. On the other hand, it would be thought a very unusual and loose kind of language to say, that as I had made such a promise, it was prudent to perform it ; or that, as my friend when he went abroad, had placed a box of jewels in my hands, it was prudent in me to preserve it for him till he returned.

‘ Now in what, you will ask, does the difference consist, inasmuch as according to our account of the matter, both in the one case and in the other—in acts of duty as well as acts of prudence—we consider solely what we ourselves shall gain or lose by the act ?

‘ The difference, and the only difference is, that in the one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world, while in the other case, we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come.’

This is indeed, as Mr. Stewart justly remarks, a *curious passage*. It requires all the respect that we really feel for Paley, to induce us to believe that he was in earnest in writing it. It is of course unnecessary to refute such reasoning in a formal way, and it is almost superfluous to remark that an action is equally the result of calculation—that is, equally performed from selfish views—whether the advantages expected from it are to be enjoyed at one period or another. On this supposition, therefore, our actions would be all acts of prudence, so that the theory—besides being obviously inconsistent with experience—involves a denial of the very *difference* which it admits, and professes to account for.

A more popular, although not more plausible explanation of the problem, which Paley has here so unsuccessfully attempted to solve, is to be found in the theories of some other partizans of the selfish system, who undertake to account for our social feelings, the reality of which they also admit, by the effect

of the *association* of ideas. The exercise of these feelings is attended with a sentiment of pleasure, and the actions which we perform under their influence, generally tend in the last result, to the promotion of our own advantage. Having learned these facts from experience, we gradually come to *associate* with the performance of such actions, the idea of the advantage which we shall ourselves derive from them ; and although their immediate and apparent object be the welfare of others, we really perform them from selfish motives as truly as if our own profit or pleasure were directly concerned.

This theory is countenanced by Paley in other passages of his work. It is also the one adopted by the school of Bentham, and is developed at length in the late work of Mill on the *Philosophy of the Mind*. Like the one we have just been considering, it admits the reality of our social feelings, and like that, fails entirely in the attempts to account for them consistently with the truth of the selfish system. On this system, self-interest is the only natural motive to action, but we are nevertheless conscious of feelings which prompt us to seek the good of others. How then did we obtain these feelings, which are, it seems, originally no part of our constitution? We obtain them, says the *Utilitarian*, by the effect of association. Now it is easy to conceive, that habit and association may in some degree vary the direction or application of any natural sentiment or power ; but it is quite clear that they cannot create a sentiment or power which we do not naturally possess. Habit may enable a man, for example, to employ his arms for the purpose of walking, and to go on all fours with some degree of facility. By long practice, he may qualify himself to dance upon a tight rope, or to tread the ceiling of a room with his head downwards, like a fly. But will habit give him an additional arm, or leg, or even finger? Will it so much as add another to the hairs of his head, which, as we are told in scripture, are all numbered? Will any variation in the usual motions and postures of his limbs enable him to wing his way through the air like a bird, or to inhabit the depths of the sea like a fish? These questions will hardly be answered by any reasonable person in the affirmative, and the attempt to account for our social feelings on the principle of association, involves absurdities of a precisely similar description. The social and selfish feelings are as completely distinct from each other as any two of our outward senses or

internal faculties ; and the supposition, that the existence of either is the result of an accidental modification of the natural action of the other, is just as philosophical and probable as it would be to suppose that hearing is a modification of touch, or sight the effect of an accidental variation in the direction of the sense of smell. In short, we cannot in any case attribute the slightest influence to the principle of association, without admitting, in the first place, the reality of the power of which the action is supposed to be augmented or modified by it ; that is, in the present instance, the reality of our social feelings, and with it the falsehood of the selfish theory.

If the case were not too clear to require much argument, it might be added, that the early period of life at which our moral sentiments display themselves, is a sufficient proof that they are not the result of habit or experience. This fact is noticed by Paley, and he endeavors to account for it in regard to such of them as he cannot conveniently resolve into self-interest on the principle of *imitation*.

‘There is nothing,’ says he, ‘which children imitate or apply more readily than expressions of affection or aversion ; of approbation, hatred, resentment, and the like ; and when once these passions and expressions are connected—which they will soon be by the same association which unites words with their ideas—the passion will follow the expression, and attach upon the object to which the child has been accustomed to apply the epithet. In a word, when almost every thing else is learned by *imitation*, can we wonder to find the same cause concerned in the generation of our moral sentiments ?’

It seems, therefore, that each succeeding generation of men acquires its moral sentiments by imitating the actions of the preceding one. By the help of this theory we can go back with great facility to the first generation or the first pair. But how did they, who had no one to imitate, acquire their moral sentiments ? Here the theory is plainly at fault. It is the old fable of the Indian Astronomer, who maintained that the earth reposed on the back of a large elephant, and the elephant on the shell of a gigantic tortoise. But what supports the tortoise ? was naturally the next question. ‘Oh !’ replied the Hindu, ‘that I do not know.’

It is truly painful and pitiful to see writers of instruction, intelligence, and apparently correct intentions, contenting themselves with sophistry of the grossest and most palpable kind

for no better reason than because it affords them a pretext for denying the reality of the best and noblest qualities of our nature ; of those qualities, without which—as Bacon justly and strikingly remarks—man is but a busy and wretched creature, no better than the vermin. If such were in fact our miserable and degraded condition, it would be natural and commendable to give way to any illusions which had a tendency to elevate our notions of the human character and destiny. I would rather, said the noble-minded Tully, be in the wrong with Plato than in the right with Epicurus. This sentiment will find a response in every generous heart. But admit for argument's sake, that it is more generous than philosophical ; admit that we are bound as honest and fearless inquirers to follow truth wherever it may lead us, were it even

Through bogs, fens, lakes, seas, rocks, and shoals of death,  
A universe of death——

admit, as Bonaparte said of his colonies, that our hopes and happiness must be sacrificed rather than a principle ; we may still pertinently ask, why we should exert a perverse ingenuity, deny or torture facts, falsify consciousness, and put up with the flimsiest appearance of argument for the strange purpose of reducing ourselves to the level of the brutes. We may conceive that an individual, beset with strong temptation and abandoned by Providence, shall commit an act of forgery, which, if undiscovered, will convey to him a large amount of wealth. But who in his senses would forge a draft upon himself, the payment of which must bring him with all his friends and family to bankruptcy and ruin ? This example is, nevertheless, a correct illustration of the conduct of the writers who maintain these degrading theories. If it were possible to give the system a coloring of probability, the actions of its supporters would undoubtedly be much more efficient for the purpose than their arguments.

In the above remarks, we have followed in the main the course of Mr. Stewart, who fully recognises the reality of moral distinctions, and establishes it in opposition to the partisans of the selfish system, upon the steadfast and immovable basis of CONSCIENCE, that is, a principle within us which approves and disapproves of actions according to their moral qualities, and often without any reference to their effect upon our own interest. His views are therefore substantially, and in

their leading features correct; and the work that exhibits them, although not free from considerable errors, may be perused without danger, and must tend, on the whole, to strengthen the great cause of religion and virtue. After affirming and establishing the reality of *Conscience*, or the *Moral Faculty*, the author proceeds, in the farther development of his theory, to inquire into the nature of this principle, and of the quality in actions which corresponds with it and brings it into exercise. We shall briefly examine his opinions on these heads, which, though ingenious and ably supported, do not appear to us to be so entirely free from question, as those which we have just been examining. The extreme importance of the subject will, we hope, be received by our readers as an apology for what might otherwise appear a rather long discussion.

II. Supposing then the reality of *Conscience*, or a principle within us by which we recognise the moral qualities of actions, the question next presents itself—what is the nature of this principle or faculty? Is it the Understanding in the exercise of its ordinary powers, or the same Understanding in the exercise of some extraordinary power with which it is furnished by nature for this particular object? If not the Understanding, is it a feeling? and if so, is it one or more of our acknowledged affections, considered under a new point of view, or is it a distinct and separate sentiment, appropriated exclusively to this function, and having some analogy with our external senses?

These inquiries were not much agitated in the ancient schools, and have chiefly grown up since the revival of philosophy in modern Europe. They were treated for the first time with remarkable power and learning by Cudworth, in his works on *Immutable Morality* and the *Intellectual System*. Hobbes had asserted, that in the natural state of man—by which he meant a state anterior to the existence of government—there could be no such thing as moral distinctions, that these were wholly a matter of positive institution, and that there was no other reason for saying that it is right to pay a debt, or wrong to commit a murder, excepting that these actions are respectively conformable or opposed to the law of the land. These principles—monstrous as they appear, and in fact are—are necessarily implied in the selfish or *Utilitarian* theory under all its forms. It is obvious, that no man is bound to promote his own pleasure or interest, considered as such, any further than it may suit his own convenience so to do.

Hence, if utility be the essence of virtue, and pleasure the only motive to action, there is in fact no obligation to do right, excepting such as results from the forms of positive law. The system, maintained under one of its worst aspects by a writer of extraordinary power and plausibility, excited of course a good deal of sensation. Cudworth, in refuting it, undertook to establish the principle, that moral distinctions are founded not in positive enactments, but in an original and immutable law of nature. This law in his theory is of so transcendent a character, that it is not only independent of social institutions but superior to the will and power of God himself. It seems to be, in his view of it, a sort of sublime and mysterious principle, resembling the FATE of the Grecian mythology, which controlled and over-mastered every thing else in the universe, even to the Father of the Gods himself. This extravagant idea, to which we shall presently give some attention, is adopted by Stewart. The principle by which we acquire our knowledge of moral distinctions is, according to Cudworth, the same by which we perceive truth, that is, the Understanding, to which he attributed the power of furnishing us with abstract notions entirely independent of any particular ones received through the senses. Of the nature of moral distinctions we can give no account. Our ideas of right and wrong are simple and undefinable. Every one knows what he means by these terms, but nobody can furnish any explanation of his meaning. This paradoxical notion is also admitted by Stewart, who is evidently a great admirer—on this subject we may say perhaps a disciple—of the learned, able, and high-minded, but not remarkably precise and clear-headed author of the *Intellectual System*.

The obvious correctness and salutary tendency of the principles of Cudworth, as far as they tended to place the foundation of morals above the sphere of positive law, together with the high degree of ability and learning displayed in his works, recommended them strongly to the public favor, and they were generally received by competent judges as a complete refutation of the doctrine of Hobbes, until the appearance of the Essay of Locke on the Human Understanding. The theory on the origin of ideas, which is maintained in that work, and which for a long time superseded every other in the public opinion, amounted to an indirect refutation of that of Cudworth upon the nature of moral distinctions. Cudworth

held, as we have stated, that our notions of right and wrong, although abstract, were supplied directly by the Understanding, while it was the opinion of Locke, that the Understanding furnishes no ideas whatever of that description, and that all our abstract notions were only generalisations of particular ones, obtained by the senses, or by an internal observation of the operations of our own minds. For those who are satisfied with the reasoning of Locke on this subject—and we profess to be of that number—the theory of Cudworth as to the manner in which we acquire our knowledge of moral distinctions falls of itself. When, however, the alarming, and, as we conceive, unjustifiable deductions, which the sceptics of France and England drew from the principles of Locke, had created a re-action in the public mind, the modern schools of philosophy, which, as we have already remarked, grew up under the operation of it in Scotland and Germany, reverted on this head to the old opinion, and affirmed that the mind possesses the power of generating, or furnishing from its own resources, abstract ideas, wholly independent of any obtained through the senses. To this class belong, in their opinion, our notions of moral distinctions. Kant accordingly lays down the principle with perfect precision and dogmatical confidence. Stewart apparently wavers a little, but comes, on the whole, to the same conclusion. In some passages he expressly classes our notions of right and wrong with those of cause and effect, number, equality, and identity, which he regards as immediate products of the Understanding, acting independently of sensation or reflection. In others he asserts, ‘that the origin of our ideas of right and wrong is manifestly the same with that of the other simple ideas already mentioned; but that whether it be referred to the understanding or not, seems to be a matter of mere arrangement, provided it be granted, that the words right and wrong express qualities of actions, and not merely a power, of exciting agreeable or disagreeable emotions in our minds.’ The extreme looseness and inaccuracy of this language in a writer generally so correct as Stewart is somewhat remarkable. The power of exciting agreeable or disagreeable emotions in the mind is obviously as much a quality, as that of creating perceptions in the Understanding, so that the words *Right* and *Wrong* when used in either sense, express equally qualities of actions. The question, whether we ought to refer the perception of them to the Understanding or the



heart, may be comparatively unimportant, but is, nevertheless, the one under consideration in this part of the work, and is obviously not answered by saying that it is a *matter of arrangement*. Mr. Stewart proceeds to remark, that the difference of opinion may, perhaps, be accounted for by the difference in the meanings which different writers attach to the term *Understanding*,—some regarding it as comprehending all our intellectual powers, and others confining it to that of argumentation and deduction. But here again his view of the subject is obviously an incorrect one. Whatever meaning we may attach to the term *Understanding*, it is equally impossible, on the theory of Locke, that this faculty can supply us with abstract ideas, and the difference between the usages of different writers in this respect, has, therefore, no effect whatever on the decision of the question at issue. It is plain, on the whole, that our author had not completely matured his opinions upon this part of the subject, but that he ranked himself among the followers of Cudworth, and professed to believe, that we obtain our notions of right and wrong immediately and directly by an original exercise of our intellectual power, entirely independent of any operation of the senses.

The incorrectness of this opinion is, as we remarked above, a necessary corollary from the theory of Locke, who has in fact employed a portion of his work in proving that we have no *Innate* or original *Moral Principles*, by which he means general ideas on the subject of moral distinctions. The plan of his Essay did not lead him to discuss, in great detail, the question how we acquire our ideas of these distinctions, and his doctrine was understood by some persons, particularly Lord Shaftesbury, as involving a denial of their reality, which it by no means does. It was perceived, however, by all to involve consequences affecting the probability of the previously prevailing opinions, and of course gave rise to new researches into the subject. One of the results of these was the theory of a *Moral Sense*, which was brought forward in a very plausible shape by Hutcheson in the early part of the last century. According to this writer, *Conscience*, or the internal principle by which we take cognisance of moral distinctions, is not the *Understanding*, but a distinct faculty, analogous to our external senses. The impressions we receive through the medium of this faculty are not perceptions, but emotions; and the intel-

lectual powers have no concern whatever in the regulation of our own conduct, or the formation of our opinions upon that of others. This system, although, as must be obvious to the reader, it will hardly bear the test even of a distinct and naked statement of its leading principle, obtained, nevertheless, by virtue, probably, in part, of its apparently excellent practical tendency, great favor in England, and has been ever since its publication pretty generally adopted by those who are not partisans of the *Utilitarian* school. Mr. Stewart himself admits it so far as to allow that our perceptions of right and wrong are accompanied respectively by agreeable or disagreeable emotions.

‘It appears to me,’ says he, ‘that the diversity of these systems has arisen in a great measure from the partial views, which different writers have taken of the same complicated subject; that these systems are by no means so exclusive of each other as has commonly been imagined, and that, in order to arrive at the truth, it is necessary for us, instead of attaching ourselves to any one, to avail ourselves of the lights that all have furnished. Our moral perceptions and emotions are in fact the result of different principles combined together. They involve a judgment of the understanding, and they involve also a feeling of the heart: and it is only by attending to both that we can form a just notion of our moral constitution. In confirmation of this remark it will be necessary for us to analyse particularly the state of our minds when we are spectators of any good or bad action performed by another person, or when we reflect on the actions performed by ourselves. On such occasions we are conscious of three different things.

- ‘1. The perception of an action as right or wrong.
- ‘2. The emotion of pleasure or pain varying in its degree according to the acuteness of our moral sensibility.
- ‘3. A perception of the merit or demerit of the agent.’

On the theory of Hutcheson there is no such thing as a *Perception* of right and wrong, or merit and demerit, in the cognisance we take of moral distinctions, and the *Internal Sense*, by which we experience an agreeable or disagreeable emotion, is the only faculty brought into exercise on the occasion. This entire exclusion of the Understanding from any agency in the formation of our ideas on this subject is of itself, as we intimated above, a sufficient, though indirect objection to the theory. It is also liable to another of a more direct and peremptory kind. If we possessed a distinct internal sense through which we experienced agreeable or disagree-

able emotions, according to the moral qualities of the actions under consideration, these emotions being excited by the same quality, however they might differ in degree, must always be of the same kind. We are certain, for example, that piety and prudence are duties as well as charity; and on this supposition the emotions excited in our minds by the performance of these several classes of duties would be exactly the same. As the impressions made upon the mind through the sense of hearing must necessarily all belong to the class of sounds, and through the sight to that of colors, so the impressions made through the moral sense, if we have one, though differing in intensity, must all be of a uniform character. Now it is generally conceded—and this, as we have already had occasion to state, is the principal argument against the selfish system—that the emotions excited by the performance of the different classes of duties are essentially various, not only in degree but in kind. We are all conscious that the feelings with which we contemplate an act of prudence, an act of charity, and an act of piety, are not the same. In the first instance, we experience a sentiment of quiet approbation; in the second, a glowing and delightful sympathy; in the last, a reverential awe. It is obvious that the theory, which attributes all these results to operations of one and the same sense, must be erroneous. We find accordingly that Hutcheson, in order to reconcile his system with fact, is obliged to deny the character of virtue to all actions excepting those which proceed from benevolent feeling. With him temperance, prudence, and piety are matters of indifference, and there is nothing worthy of moral approbation but charity. This error, though more agreeable, is not less evident than that of the partisans of the selfish system. Like them, in accounting for our moral sentiments, he throws out of view all but one of the three great classes of which they are composed. No system is, of course, admissible, which does not furnish a complete and equally satisfactory explanation of them all.

It appears, therefore, that the two opinions, which have prevailed most generally in modern times, among those persons, who admit the reality of moral distinctions, as to the nature of the faculty by which we acquire our knowledge of them, both of which are received in connexion by Stewart, although they have been before supposed to exclude each other, are both erroneous statements of the real facts in the case. The truth seems

to be, that reason and feeling are both concerned in the cognisance we take of moral distinctions, not, however, by the exercise of any specific faculty belonging to either of these departments of our nature, but in the usual discharge of their regular and ordinary functions. The agreeable emotions connected with the performance of acts of duty are not the product of a separate moral sense, but comprehend all the different kinds of satisfaction which we derive respectively from the exercise of the selfish, social, and religious principles of our nature. These principles or inclinations lead us directly to the performance of the several sorts of actions, which correspond with them, not as acts of duty, but as acts in which we take a natural delight. When the Understanding comes to consider and classify these acts it recognises them as results of the relations which naturally connect us with God, our fellow-men, and the objects around us. These relations taken together compose what is called the *Law of Nature*, and our actions, when viewed as conformable to these relations, are described as *acts of duty*, performed in obedience to the *Law of Nature*, that is, in other words, to the *Will of God*.

III. The characteristic of Virtue, is, therefore, obedience to the Law of Nature, that is, the will of God ; the distinction between *Right* and *Wrong* lies in conformity or nonconformity to this great rule. This, however, is not the theory of Stewart and Cudworth, who both affirm, that the nature of this distinction is wholly inexplicable. We all, according to them, know perfectly well what we mean by the terms *Right* and *Wrong*, but are nevertheless incapable of giving any explanation of them. Our notions of right and wrong are incapable of analysis. They are simple ideas or notions, of which the names do not admit of definition. 'We can define the words *Right* and *Wrong* only by synonymous words or phrases, or by the properties and necessary concomitants of what they denote. Thus we may say of the word *right*, that it expresses what we *ought to do*, what is *fair* and *honest*, what is *approvable*, what *every man professes to be the rule of his conduct*, what *all men praise*, and what is in itself *laudable, though no man praise it*. In such definitions and explanations, it is evident that we only substitute a synonymous expression instead of the word defined, or we characterise the quality, which the word denotes by some circumstance, connected with it or resulting from it, as a consequence ; and, therefore, we may with con-

fidence conclude, that the word in question expresses a simple idea.' 'The various duties which have been considered, all agree with each other in one common quality, that of being *obligatory* on rational and voluntary agents, and they are all enjoined by the same authority—the *authority of conscience*. These duties, therefore, are but different articles of *one law*, which is properly expressed by the word *virtue*.'

Thus, in the opinion of our author, we know nothing of the nature of the qualities of actions which we call *right*, or, in a word, of the nature of *virtue*, excepting that it is the subject of the approbation of the internal principle which we call *conscience*.

The modes of expression, employed by our author on this subject, are repugnant, we think, to the common sense and feeling of mankind. It is no doubt true, that in general, when we speak of the moral qualities of actions, we mean nothing more than that they awaken within us certain feelings of approbation or disapprobation, which, in the theory of our author, are the results of the action of certain specific faculties, but which we regard as the exercise of our ordinary natural sentiments and affections. These were given us by Providence, as guides to regulate our conduct, and with the mass of mankind, who have but little capacity for abstract reasoning, they are the only natural ones. But when we mean to employ a strict and scientific language, it appears extremely singular, to say that the Understanding has no share in the formation of our notions of moral qualities; and to maintain with Stewart and Cudworth, that the *Understanding* supplies us with ideas which we do not *understand*, is, in our judgment, nothing less than a contradiction in terms. We have stated above, that on our view of the subject the terms *Right* and *Wrong* are susceptible of a very simple, distinct, and satisfactory explanation, and that the essential characteristic of *Virtue*, is *Conformity to the Law of Nature*, or—which is the same thing in other words—*Obedience to the Will of God*. This account of the matter appears at first view diametrically opposite to that of Stewart, but on further reflection, the difference will be found to be rather apparent than real. The error, and it is no doubt by far the most common one in all inquiries of this description, does not consist so much in misapprehending the facts as in giving an incorrect statement of them. It is no doubt true, that in the first instance we know nothing further of moral qualities excepting that certain par-

ticular actions awaken in us respectively certain feelings of approbation and disapprobation. Thus far the whole is a matter of feeling. But when the understanding comes to classify and generalise the particular facts, it ascertains, as we remarked above, that they are results of certain relations, established by nature between us and the other component parts of the universal system, to which we give the name of laws, and which we refer to the will of the Creator, who determined the character of every object, and, of course, the relations that exist between them all. Having reached this point, we can give a distinct, intelligible, and rational account of our notions of right and wrong, which were, in the first instance, a mere matter of fact and feeling. This account is not inconsistent with the facts supposed by Stewart, and is at variance with his chiefly in proceeding one or two steps further than he did in the course of reasoning upon which he had entered, and completing a defective part of his theory. He confined his attention to particular actions, and the impressions they make upon us, without appearing to recollect that by classifying these actions in connexion with the motives that led to them, we obtain a general and intelligible notion of moral qualities, or in other words, of the characteristics of virtue. The notion we thus obtain, furnishes an easy explanation of the terms that are habitually used in reference to the subject. By a right action we mean, according to the etymological interpretation, as well as popular and correct understanding of the word, using it in reference to the existing institutions of society, an action conformable to the relations established by these institutions among the different members of the body politic—conformable, in a word, to the law of the land. Hence when we speak of actions, as conformable to the relations established previously to any human institutions by the Supreme Ruler of the universe, which are the prototype and basis of all positive law, it is perfectly natural to employ the same term *Right* in the new and enlarged sense of obedience to the law of nature, that is, the will of its divine author.

The essential ingredient in the notion of *Right* and *Wrong*—the essential characteristic of virtue is, therefore, *conformity to the law of nature*, or, in other words, *obedience to the law of God*. This Law of Nature is, of course, as such, anterior to any human institution, and independent of the will of any human sovereign. But is it also prior in the order of events

to the creation of the universe, and independent of the will of God himself? These questions are answered in the affirmative by Stewart and Cudworth, who appear, as we stated above, to have borrowed from the ancient Greek Mythology, the notion of that strange and mysterious power, which the poets called *DESTINY*, and which overruled alike the will of Gods and Men. Such at least is the construction which may naturally enough be put on their doctrines. It may not be impossible, as we shall presently see, to reconcile this language with the truth of the case, but we must, at all events, consider it as involving many extravagant and hazardous forms of expression, and as fitted to encourage degrading and inadequate ideas of the Divine nature. As this speculation is of a very high and curious character, it may not be disagreeable to our readers to peruse a few of the passages relating to it in the works of the writers alluded to, to which we shall annex some brief remarks of our own.

‘Whatsoever,’ says Cudworth, ‘*was the true meaning* of those philosophers, that affirm justice and injustice to be only by law, and not by nature, certain it is, that divers modern theologers do not only seriously, but zealously contend in like manner, that there is nothing absolutely, intrinsically, and naturally good and evil, just and unjust, antecedently to any positive command or prohibition of God, but that the arbitrary will and pleasure of God—that is, an omnipotent Being, devoid of all essential and natural justice—by its commands and prohibitions, is the first and only rule and measure thereof. Whence it follows, unavoidably, that nothing can be imagined so grossly wicked, or so foully unjust or dishonest, but if it were supposed to be commanded by this omnipotent Deity, must needs, upon that hypothesis, become holy, just, and righteous. For, though the ancient fathers of the Christian Church were very abhorrent from this doctrine, yet it crept up afterwards in the scholastic age, Ockham being among the first that maintained that there is no act evil, but as it is prohibited by God, and which cannot be made good if it be commanded by him. And herein Petrus Alliacus and Andreas de Novo Castro, with others, quickly followed him.

‘Now the necessary and unavoidable consequences of this opinion are such as these,—that to love God is *by Nature* an indifferent thing, and is morally good only because it is enjoined by his command;—that holiness is not a conformity

with the Divine nature and attributes ;—that God hath no natural inclination to the good of his creatures, and might *justly* doom an innocent creature to eternal torment ;—all of which propositions, with others of the kind, are word for word asserted by some late authors, though I think not fit to mention the names of any of them in this place, excepting only one, Joannes Sydlovius, who, in a book published at *Franeker*, hath professedly avowed and maintained the grossest of them. And yet neither he nor the rest are to be thought any more blameworthy herein than many others, that, holding the same premises, have either dissembled or disowned those conclusions which unavoidably follow therefrom, but rather to be commended for their openness, simplicity, and ingenuity, in representing their opinion naked to the world, such as indeed it is, without any veil or mask.’

The opinions here expressed by Cudworth, are approved and adopted by Stewart in the following passage.

‘In the passage, which was formerly quoted from Dr. Cudworth, mention is made of various authors, particularly among the theologians of the scholastic ages, who were led to call in question the immutability of moral distinctions by the pious design of magnifying the perfections of the Deity. I am sorry to observe, that these notions are not as yet completely exploded ; and that, in our own age, they have misled the speculations of some writers of considerable genius, particularly of Dr. Johnson, Soame Jenyns, and Dr. Paley. Such authors certainly do not recollect, that what they add to the divine power and majesty, they take away from his moral attributes ; for if moral distinctions be not immutable and eternal, it is absurd to speak of the *Goodness* or of the *Justice* of God.

“Whoever thinks,” says Shaftesbury, “that there is a God, and pretends formally to believe that he is *just* and *good*, must suppose, that there is such a thing as *Justice* and *Injustice*, *Truth* and *Falsehood*, *Right* and *Wrong* ; according to which eternal and immutable standards, he pronounces that God is *just*, *righteous*, and *true*. If the mere will, decree, or law of God, be said absolutely to constitute *Right* and *Wrong*, then are these latter words of no signification at all.”

‘In justice, indeed, to one of the writers above mentioned, (Dr. Paley,) it is proper for me to observe, that the objection just now stated has not escaped his attention, and that he has even attempted an answer to it ; but it is an answer in which he admits the justness of the inference which we have drawn from his premises ; or, in other words, admits, that to speak of the moral



attributes of God, or to say that he is *Just, Righteous*, and *True*, is to employ words which are altogether nugatory and unmeaning. That I may not be accused of misinterpreting the doctrine of this ingenious writer, who on many accounts deserves the popularity he enjoys, I shall quote his own statement of his opinion on this subject.

“ Since moral obligation depends, as we have seen, upon the will of God, *Right*, which is co-relative to it, must depend upon the same. Right, therefore, signifies *consistency with the will of God*. But if the divine will determine the distinction of right and wrong, what else is it but an identical proposition to say of God that he acts right? Or how is it possible even to conceive that he should act wrong? Yet these assertions are intelligible and significant. The case is this. By virtue of the two principles, that God wills the happiness of his creatures, and that the will of God is the measure of right and wrong, we arrive at certain conclusions, which conclusions become rules; and we soon learn to pronounce actions right and wrong, according as they agree or disagree with our rules, without looking farther; and when the habit is once established of stopping at the rules, we can go back and compare with these rules, even the divine conduct itself, and yet it may be true, (only not observed by us at the time,) that the rules themselves are deduced from the divine will.”

‘ To this very extraordinary passage, (some parts of which, I confess, I do not completely comprehend, but which plainly gives up the *Moral Attributes of God*, as a form of words that conveys no meaning) I have no particular answer to offer. That it was written with the purest intentions, and from the complete conviction of the author’s own mind, I am perfectly satisfied from the general scope of his book, as well as from the strong testimony of the first names in England in favor of the worth of the writer; but it leads to consequences of the most alarming nature, coinciding in every material respect with the systems of those scholastic theologians, whom Dr. Cudworth classes with the Epicurean philosophers of old, and whose errors that great and excellent writer has refuted with so splendid a display of learning, and such irresistible force of argument.’

There is a slight mixture of truth in these remarks of Cudworth and Stewart, which serves to give them in some parts an air of probability, and by the aid of which, and a little charitable construction, they might perhaps be reconciled with facts; but they are fitted, we think, on the whole, to convey a most erroneous notion of the subject. These writers agree in the opinion we have expressed above, that moral distinctions

are founded in a law of nature anterior to, and independent of any positive institution; or, in other words, in the relations existing among the various orders of intelligent and moral beings. They also admit, that the universe owes its existence to the power and will of God; and the question is, whether the relations between the different persons and objects composing the universe be, or be not an effect of the will of the Creator who formed the whole. If the Power that governs the universal system think proper to create the sun with a diameter of about eight hundred and eighty thousand miles, and the earth with one of about eight thousand, is it, or is it not an effect of his will, that the sun is larger than the earth? Common sense replies of course in the affirmative. Mr. Stewart and Cudworth maintain the negative. The supposition being made, say they, that the sun and the earth are created with the diameters which they now respectively possess, it follows, of *necessity*, that the sun must be larger than the earth, and the will of God himself cannot prevent it. There is, as we remarked above, some appearance of plausibility in this idea, which, however, disappears when we recollect, that the two propositions are only different expressions of the same facts. To say that the sun is larger than the earth, is only saying in more general terms, that they are respectively of such and such diameters, and as the will of God is admitted to be the reason why they are of such and such diameters, it is also, of course, the reason why one of them is larger than the other.

The case is the same with the moral relations between intelligent and rational beings. Is it, or is it not an effect of the will of God, that it is the duty of parents to love their children, and of children to love their parents, that it is the duty of us all, not to sacrifice the happiness of other men to the gratification of our own animal appetites? Here too, Stewart and Cudworth maintain the negative. 'For my own part,' says Stewart, 'I can as easily conceive a rational being so formed, as to believe the three angles of a triangle to be equal to *one* right angle, as to believe, that if he had it in his power, it would be *right* to sacrifice the happiness of other men to the gratification of his own animal appetites; or that there would be no *injustice* in depriving an industrious old man of the fruits of his own laborious acquisitions. The exercise of our reason in the two cases is very different; but, in both cases, we have a perception of *truth*, and are impressed with an irresistible con-

viction, that the *truth is immutable and independent of the will of any being whatever.*' Here again, there is an appearance of plausibility, which disappears as before, when we recollect, that the only fact affirmed in the proposition here supposed to be a necessary truth, is one which is admitted to be an immediate effect of the will of God. To say that parents are bound in duty by the law of nature to love their children, that we are all bound in duty by the law of nature to relieve distress, as in the cases here supposed by Stewart, is only saying, in other words, that there is a principle of love implanted by nature in the heart of every individual man, which displays itself under various forms, according to the particular situation and circumstances in which it operates. But the existence of this principle within us is admitted by all to be an effect of the will of God; and the fact, that we are bound in duty to love our neighbor, which is only another mode of expressing the same thing, must, of course, be referred to the same cause.

The intelligent reader will readily perceive, that there is the same fallacy in the mathematical illustration employed by Stewart in the above extract, as in the principal argument which it was brought to illustrate. The question whether it be an effect of the will of God, that the three angles of a triangle are not equal to *one* right angle, is precisely parallel to the one before stated, whether it be an effect of the will of God that the sun is larger than the earth. It is admitted to be an effect of the will of God, that a given figure has three sides and not two or four, and to say that the three angles formed by these three sides are not equal to a right angle, is only stating under a different point of view, the same fact, which must of course be attributed to the same cause. In short, the propositions which express relations, whether physical or moral, are only statements in a more general form of the existence and qualities of individual objects. These are regarded by all as creations of the divine will, which consequently determines the relations between them. To affirm that the same power which determined that Saturn should have seven satellites, and Herschel only five, did not determine that Saturn should have more satellites than Herschel, is plainly contradictory to common sense; and when we find philosophers of high and deserved reputation maintaining this assertion, we naturally conjecture that they are influenced by

some accidental motive entirely foreign to the merits of the question.

The nature of the motive that operated in this instance upon the minds of Stewart and Cudworth, is apparent from the tenor of the passages quoted above. They were apprehensive, that if we consider moral distinctions as 'results of the will of God,' we shall be obliged to withdraw from our ideas of the divine nature, the moral attributes which we generally consider as belonging to it. 'Such authors certainly do not recollect,' says Stewart, 'that what they add to the divine power and majesty, they take away from his moral attributes; for if moral distinctions be not immutable and eternal, it is absurd to speak of the goodness or of the justice of God.' 'If we suppose,' says Cudworth, 'that the arbitrary will and pleasure of God—that is, an omnipotent Being, devoid of all essential and immutable justice—by its commands and prohibitions is the first and only rule and measure of right and wrong, it would follow unavoidably, that nothing could be imagined so grossly wicked or so foully unjust or dishonest, but if it were supposed to be commanded by this omnipotent Deity, must needs upon that hypothesis become holy, just, and righteous.' 'Whoever thinks,' says Shaftesbury, 'that there is a God, and pretends firmly to believe that he is *just* and *good*, must suppose that there is independently such a thing as *Justice* and *Injustice*, *Truth* and *Falsehood*, *Right* and *Wrong*, according to which eternal and immutable standards, he pronounces that God is *just*, *righteous*, and *true*. If the mere will, decree, or law of God be said absolutely to constitute right and wrong, then are these latter words of no signification at all.' In all this there is much confusion of ideas, which obviously results from the implied supposition, that the moral attributes of God, if real, must be of the same nature with ours. But is it possible that either of these writers can have imagined, or that any person of sound mind can for a moment imagine, that God is just and good in the sense which we attach to these terms, when we apply them to ourselves? It would surely be the height of absurdity, as well as irreverence, to conceive of the Divine Being as involved in the sphere of our ordinary family and social relations; yet the terms *Good* and *Just*, as we apply them to ourselves, are merely generalisations of the more particular qualifications of a good father, a good husband, a good neighbor, friend, and citizen. Do we then deny the reality of

the moral attributes of God, because we do not believe that they operate under the modes which belong to our limited and transitory sphere of action? Surely not. Do we deny the existence of God, when we say that the manner of it is entirely different from that of ours? Do we deny the intelligence of God when we affirm that 'his ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts?' Why then should we be thought to impeach the goodness and justice of God by supposing them to be manifested under forms entirely foreign to the law of our nature? We believe, and the opinion is authorized by scripture, that our intellectual and moral part, 'the God within the mind,' is in some faint and imperfect degree an image of the Sublime Intelligence, that created and governs the Universe. In attempting to form an idea of the attributes of this 'High and Holy One,' we suppose the wisdom, power, and goodness that constitute the best qualities of our own better nature, elevated to an infinitely higher pitch than that in which we possess them, and combined in perfect harmony without any mixture of earthly alloy. The mode of existence and action that belongs to such a being is entirely above our comprehension. We know that it must be wholly different from ours, but in affirming that the law of our nature is an effect of the will and not a rule for the conduct of God, we make no approach to a denial of his attributes, intellectual or moral. We may surely imagine a principle of Intelligence, that is exercised without the intervention of our material senses,—a principle of Love that displays itself in other forms than those which result from our social relations,—as easily as a principle of Being independent of the laws of our existence, independent of the limits of time and space, inhabiting at once the mysterious mansions of eternity, and the secret recesses of the humble and contrite heart. On the other hand, how degrading is the notion that this mighty and mysterious Being is himself bound down by a law superior to, and independent of his own power and will! Instead of being the law-giver of the Universe, God, in this theory, is only the first subject of some more elevated principle, that prescribes a rule for his actions, enforced, no doubt, in the usual way, by appropriate rewards and punishments. But who shall undertake to judge whether God, in establishing the law of nature, has obeyed the higher and immutable law, which Destiny imposes on him? This office, on the theory we are considering, devolves on man. 'Who-

ever thinks that there is a God,' says Shaftesbury in the passage above quoted, 'and pretends formally to believe that he is *just* and *good*, must suppose that there is independently such a thing as *Justice* and *Injustice*, *Truth* and *Falsehood*, *Right* and *Wrong*, according to which eternal and immutable standards **HE** pronounces that God is *just*, *righteous*, and *true*.' Man, therefore, is the appointed arbiter, who takes cognisance of the actions of God, compares them with the immutable decrees of Destiny, (from what digest or collection of reports he obtains his knowledge of the latter does not so fully appear,) and **PRONOUNCES** that it is or is not conformable to them. Man, it must be owned is on this theory a pretty important personage; being, if we are not mistaken in the order of precedence, a degree higher than Destiny itself—to say nothing of Deity—since the Judge is regularly superior to both the parties, who attend at his tribunal and await his decision. One hardly knows whether to smile or tremble at these irreverent absurdities, which are however necessary conclusions from the theory of Cudworth and Stewart. In comparison with these, the strange inconsistency with fact in the concluding remark of Shaftesbury, as quoted above, is hardly worth noticing. 'If the mere will, decree, or law of God be said absolutely to constitute *Right* and *Wrong*, then are the latter words of no signification at all.' Now it is admitted by these writers, as we have already seen, that on their system the words *Right* and *Wrong* have no meaning, or at least none that can be stated by one person to another. They are acknowledged not to be susceptible of analysis, definition, or explanation. On the other hand, the theory, which describes them as indicating conformity to the law of nature, or obedience to the will of God, assigns to them a meaning, to our minds perfectly satisfactory, but which must appear at all events precise and intelligible even to those who deny its correctness. The remark of Shaftesbury is of course exactly the reverse of the truth.

For ourselves, therefore, we would join without hesitation in the sublime interrogatory of the illustrious Hooker, so often quoted, and so little weighed and understood, which contains in a single line the quintessence of Philosophy preserved in the purest spirit of Poetry. 'What then shall we say of law, but that its seat is the bosom of God,—its voice the harmony of the world?' *Its seat is the bosom of God*. God in the independent exercise of his own high attributes, issued the

decrees that determined the existence, form and qualities of all created things, and fixed in so doing the laws that regulate their modes of being and of action. *Its voice is the harmony of the world.* The great movement of nature, which proceeds in obedience to this transcendent law is a perpetual publication of it—a perpetual revelation of the will of its author. ‘Day unto day,’ says the “monarch minstrel” of scripture in his unequalled strains of devotion and poetry, ‘day unto day uttereth speech—night unto night showeth forth knowledge. No sound—no language—their voice is not heard—but their meaning goeth forth to the ends of the earth—their sense is understood by all the nations.’ *Its voice is the harmony of the world.* We obtain the knowledge of it not from black-letter statute-books, and dusty commentaries, but from the bright and living face of nature, as its various features impress the senses, inform the understanding, excite the imagination and touch the heart. We inhale it in the balmy breath of morning, we read it inscribed on characters of light in the blue expanse of the starry firmament, and embroidered in flowers of every hue on the green mantle of spring. We hear it in the whispers of the ‘sweet South’—in the warbling of the birds—in the trumpet-tones of the wintry hurricane. We feel it in the secret suggestions of our own hearts. The sages of the old Italian school, in their lofty allegories, described this universal harmony of the world as the *Music of the Spheres*, and they said that it could only be heard in the *silence of the passions*. In this, too, they were right. The secret of truth and virtue is revealed to those only who seek with purity and singleness of mind to discover it. When we yield to irregular desires, and disturb the grand concert of the Universe with the dissonant uproar of vicious indulgence, we are forthwith punished by an incapacity to hear and enjoy it. The great book of nature becomes forever after a sealed volume, and the divine law, which it unfolds to us, an impenetrable mystery.

If, however, we suppose the characteristic of virtue to be, as we have described it, conformity to the law of nature, that is, obedience to the will of God, we may solve with comparative facility the question, which has frequently been agitated whether the natural affections be in themselves virtuous. This question, as we have already had occasion to remark, is decided by Mr. Stewart in the negative, not only in reference to the selfish, but also to the social and benevolent affections.

‘It is not my intention,’ says he, ‘to exalt our natural affections into virtues. So far as they arise from original constitution, they confer no merit whatever on the individual any more than his appetites and passions.

‘Hutcheson seems to consider virtue as a quality of our *affections*, whereas it is really a quality of our *actions*; or, perhaps, in strict propriety, of those *dispositions* from which our actions immediately proceed. Our benevolent affections are always amiable, but, in so far as they are constitutional, they are certainly in no respect meritorious. Indeed some of them are common to us with the brutes. When they are possessed in an eminent degree, we may perhaps consider them as a ground of moral esteem, because they indicate the pains which have been bestowed on their cultivation, and a course of active virtue in which they have been exercised and strengthened. On the contrary, a person who wants them is always an object of horror; *chiefly* because we know that they are only to be eradicated by long habits of profligacy, and *partly* in consequence of the uneasiness we feel when we see the ordinary course of nature violated, as in a monstrous animal production. It is from these two facts, that the plausibility of Dr. Hutcheson’s language on this subject in a great measure arises; but if the facts be accurately examined, they will be found perfectly consistent with the doctrine already laid down, that nothing is an object of moral praise or blame but what depends on our own voluntary exertions; and of consequence, that these terms are not applicable to our benevolent or malevolent affections, so far as we suppose them to result necessarily from our constitutional frame.

‘There is another consideration, too, which, on a superficial view, appears favorable both to Hutcheson’s language and system, the peculiar and enthusiastic admiration with which all mankind regard a man of enlightened and active benevolence. Such a character draws upon itself not merely the *applauses*, but the *blessings* of the world, and assimilates human nature to what we conceive of those ministering angels who are the immediate instruments of the Divine goodness and mercy.

‘In order to think with accuracy on this very important point of morals, it is necessary to distinguish those benevolent affections, which urge us to their respective objects by a blind impulse, from that rational and enlightened benevolence, which interests us in the happiness of all mankind, and indeed of all the orders of sensitive beings. This Divine principle of action appears but little in the bulk of our species; for although the seeds of it are sown in every breast, it requires long and careful cultivation to rear them to maturity, choked as they are by envy, by



jealousy, by selfishness, and by those contracted views, which originate in unenlightened schemes of human policy. Clear away these noxious weeds, and the genuine benevolence of the human heart will appear in all its beauty. No wonder then that we should regard, with such peculiar sentiments of veneration, the character of one whom we consider as the sincere and unwearied friend of humanity; for such a character implies the existence of all the other virtues; more particularly of candid and just dispositions towards our fellow-creatures, and implies, moreover, a long course of persevering exertion in combating prejudices and in eradicating narrow and malignant passions. The gratitude, besides, which all men feel towards one in whose benevolent wishes they know themselves to be comprehended, contributes to enliven the former sentiment of moral esteem; and both together throw so peculiar a lustre on this branch of duty as goes far to account for the origin of those systems, which represent it as the only direct object of moral approbation.

‘But what I am chiefly anxious to infer at present from these remarks is, that there is nothing in this approbation of a rational and enlightened benevolence, which at all invalidates the doctrine, that virtue, in all its branches, supposes a course of voluntary exertion under the guidance of a sense of duty.’

In these observations on the moral value of the benevolent affections, Mr. Stewart has been embarrassed and led into error by his theory of a distinct and separate *Moral Faculty*, entirely independent of the usual operations of the mind and heart. There is obviously a strange inconsistency in admitting that we regard an individual of a remarkably benevolent character with *Enthusiastic Admiration*, with *Gratitude*, with *Veneration*, with *Moral Esteem*, and at the same time denying that we regard benevolence with moral approbation. What difference can be made, in the correct use of language, between *Moral Esteem* and *Moral Approbation*? Gratitude, veneration—enthusiastic admiration, when directed towards a character, which is a proper object of moral esteem, are only different names for the same feeling in its most exalted degrees. And, as in a matter of feeling like this, the common sentiment of men is the surest and indeed the only test of truth, Mr. Stewart, by this admission, has recorded a decision completely adverse to his own theory. The attempt which he makes to account for our enthusiastic admiration of benevolence, on the principle that this quality supposes the union of justice in the same character, is also very singular. Benevo-

lence no doubt supposes justice, but justice itself is not an object of admiration. It is a merely negative virtue, and consists in not inflicting on others a positive injury. How can it be maintained with plausibility that we admire benevolence, because it includes justice, when we do not admire justice itself in its own acknowledged form? To say that we admire benevolence because it supposes or includes justice; that is, that we admire a benevolent man because we are sure that he does not defraud and oppress his fellow-citizens, is much like saying that we admire fine poetry because we are sure that it must be written with a correct observance of all the rules of grammar. Such are the inconsistencies and singularities into which Mr. Stewart has been led by his attempt to deprive benevolence of the character of virtue. The distinction which he takes in this respect between the *actions* and *affections* is no doubt founded in fact, but is in no way inconsistent with the theory which considers benevolence as virtuous. Virtue, we know, is a quality of actions, and benevolence, so far as it is an involuntary effect of original constitution or favorable circumstance, confers no merit. When we say that we approve and admire benevolence, we mean that we approve and admire it as a *motive* to action; that we consider actions performed with this motive as virtuous; that we regard an individual, who acts upon this motive with moral approbation; one who acts upon it habitually and to an uncommon extent, with enthusiastic admiration. All this agrees entirely with the common forms of language, and with the common sense and feeling of the world. Mr. Stewart is compelled to refuse his assent to it by his system, which places the characteristic of virtue in a conformity to a moral *Faculty* or *Sense* entirely distinct and separate from our natural affections. We have just seen to what difficulties he is reduced by attempting to account, consistently with this system, for acknowledged facts. On the other hand, the theory, which supposes that our natural sentiments, and especially the benevolent affections, are themselves the principal elements of what we call the *Moral Sense* or *Faculty* is perfectly consistent with these facts and with the usual forms of language employed throughout the world. It reconciles philosophy with common sense, which, although it be no foundation for scientific theories, is the best test of their correctness and the best check upon their errors. Were there no other objection to the theory of an independent *Moral Fac-*

ulty but this, that it deprives benevolence of the character of virtue, we should feel no hesitation in rejecting it as completely at variance with the consciousness of every correct and uncorrupted mind.

We are aware that authority, however high, is of no weight as such in philosophical discussion ; but as Mr. Stewart has himself resorted to the Bible for evidence in support of some of his views on the nature of the Moral Faculty, we may perhaps be permitted to appeal to the same high arbiter in favor of the opinions we have suggested above.

‘It is difficult,’ says our author, ‘to explain the following words of scripture in any other sense, than by applying them to such doctrines concerning the factitious origin of moral distinctions as have now been under our review. “Woe unto them that put evil for good, and good for evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.”’

Without intending to dispute the application here made by Mr. Stewart of this text, which really does not appear to us to be a very natural one, we cannot but remark that it would be easy to point out passages of scripture far more direct and explicit in favor of the opinion that benevolence is a virtue. The eloquent apostle to the Gentiles employs a whole chapter of one of the Epistles to the Corinthians in illustrating and developing this principle ; and our Saviour himself expressly declares, that to ‘love our neighbor as ourself’ is one of the two great commandments, which make up together the *Whole Law*. This declaration, although it has no logical effect upon the argument, of course decides the question for those, who admit the authority of scripture. We allude to it here principally for the purpose of showing that there is nothing heretical, dangerous, or contrary to received truths in the theory, which we have stated on the subject.

IV. We have enlarged so much on the preceding head, that we have left ourselves but little space to examine the principles of our author in reference to the fourth and last branch of the inquiry, which treats of the nature and origin of Moral Obligation. His views respecting these points are succinctly stated in the following extract.

‘According to some systems, moral obligation is founded entirely on our belief that virtue is enjoined by the command of God. But how, it may be asked, does this belief impose an ob-

ligation? Only one of two answers can be given. Either that there is a moral fitness that we should conform our will to that of the Author and Governor of the universe; or that a rational self-love should induce us, from motives of prudence, to study every means of rendering ourselves acceptable to the Almighty Arbiter of happiness and misery. On the first supposition we reason in a circle. We resolve our sense of moral obligation into our sense of religion, and the sense of religion into that of moral obligation.

'The other system, which makes virtue a mere matter of prudence, although not so obviously unsatisfactory, leads to consequences, which sufficiently invalidate every argument in its favor. Among others it leads us to conclude, 1. That the disbelief of a future state absolves from all moral obligation, excepting in so far as we find virtue to be conducive to our present interest. 2. That a being independently and completely happy cannot have any moral perceptions, or any moral attributes.

'But farther, the notions of reward and punishment presuppose the notions of right and wrong. They are sanctions of virtue, or additional motives to the practice of it, but they suppose the existence of some previous obligation.

'In the last place, if moral obligation be constituted by a regard to our situation in another life, how shall the existence of a future state be proved, or even rendered probable by the light of nature? or how shall we discover what conduct is acceptable to the Deity? The truth is, that the strongest presumption for such a state is deduced from our natural notions of right and wrong; of merit and demerit; and from a comparison between these and the general course of human affairs.

'It is absurd, therefore, to ask *why* we are bound to practise virtue. The very notion of virtue implies the notion of obligation. Every being, who is conscious of the distinction of right and wrong, carries about with him a law, which he is bound to observe, notwithstanding he may be in total ignorance of a future state.'

We agree with our author that the idea of obligation is implied in that of virtue, but we are not quite sure that the connexion between them would be quite so clear as he imagines it to be if we admit his own definition of the latter term. Virtue, as the reader will recollect, is, on the system of Mr. Stewart, a conduct conformable to the dictates of conscience, and conscience is an internal monitor, wholly independent of the intellectual powers and natural affections, which serve to determine and regulate our conduct. This monitor approves a certain action

or line of conduct ; but why am I, therefore, bound to perform or pursue it ? The question really does not seem to us so absurd, nor the answer so clear, as Mr. Stewart appears to suppose. There is also, in our opinion, an obvious inconsistency in stating that the idea of obligation is implied in that of right, after having previously declared the latter to be entirely simple and not susceptible of explanation or analysis. An idea, which implies or includes another, is of course complex and susceptible of being analysed into at least two. But considering virtue, as we have explained it to be, a line of conduct conformable to the Law of Nature, the connexion, or rather identity, of the two ideas is undoubtedly obvious. Obligation is the name we give to the necessity, which an individual is under of accommodating his conduct to the laws to which he is subject ; and by moral obligation we mean the necessity of this kind, which results from a Law of Nature, as contradistinguished from the positive institutions of society. Such is the etymological and usual signification of the terms. To say, therefore, that virtue consists in a conduct conformable to the law of our nature, and that we are under a moral obligation to practise virtue, is only saying the same thing in different words. Should the question be asked, why we are bound to obey this Law of Nature, the answer is plain. The Law of Nature is the form of our existence and action—the mode in which we live and move and have our being. It remains the same whether we will or not, and we are *obliged to obey it*, that is, we *must* submit to its operation in one shape or another, because every being must of necessity exist and act according to the principles of its constitution, and not in any other way. By the effect of one of these principles of our constitution, which is the freedom of the will, we are able to vary in some degree the manner in which we are affected by some of the other principles, and to determine whether their influence upon us shall be productive of pleasure or pain, satisfaction or remorse, happiness or misery ; but in either event we are equally subject to the action of the law, from which no effort or accident can ever enable us to escape.

The idea of obligation is, therefore, undoubtedly implied in that of virtue, if we intend by the latter term what it properly means, a conduct conformable to the Law of Nature. But this Law of Nature is itself a mere expression of the will of God, which is, therefore, the real and ultimate principle of

moral obligation. God, by creating the universe in a certain form, and by maintaining it in the same when it could not continue to exist for a single moment without his intervention, declared, and is constantly declaring, his will, that the several beings, of all orders and classes, that compose the universe, shall exist and act in a certain way, that is, according to the principles of the constitution which he has respectively given them. If, then, the question be asked, why this or that being is bound to exist, or act in a particular form—why the planets are subject to the law of gravity, and men to that of moral obligation—the true and only answer is, that such is the will of God. If we push the inquiry still further, and ask, why we are bound to obey the will of God, the answer is, that the necessity, physical and moral, of obeying his will, is implied in the fact of our existence and of our relation to him as our Creator and Preserver. In this there is no reasoning in a circle. We do not say, as Mr. Stewart intimates, that we are bound to obey the will of God because there is a moral ‘fitness’ in so doing—that is, because in so doing we should act in conformity to that higher rule of right which he supposes to exist independently of the power and will of God himself, and which, as we have shown already, is a vain and baseless fiction. *Necessity* and not *fitness* is the sense conveyed by the term *obligation*. We are *obliged* to obey the will of God because we cannot avoid it—because his will is the principle of our existence and the law of our nature. We must exist and act in the way that he has prescribed for us in all our relations, physical and moral, and we cannot exist and act, or even conceive the possibility of existing and acting in a different one. Within the sphere of activity, that belongs to our nature, there is, no doubt, a certain latitude allowed to individuals by the freedom of the will, but even in the exercise of this freedom they are, as we remarked above, subject to the same divine law, and have no choice but that of submitting to its operation in one way or another.

Mr. Stewart could not take this view of the subject because he unfortunately failed to perceive that the will of God was the real source of the moral law of nature. In attempting to trace the latter to a mysterious and imaginary cause, independent of, and superior to the great Creating Principle of the universe, he not only proposed to himself an obviously impracticable object, but vitiated the foundation of his whole theory

of ethics. By adopting this system, he was compelled to dissolve the natural connexion between Virtue and Religion, thus depriving the former of its only sure basis, and the latter of its chief practical value. Our leading purpose in the remarks which we have now made has been—as far as depended on our feeble efforts—to restore this union, on which, as we conceive the subject, depends entirely the harmony of nature and the happiness of man. We are aware that the limits of an article like this, even in the extended form which we have been obliged to give to it, are wholly inadequate to a full and satisfactory developement of these momentous truths. We may, perhaps, avail ourselves of some future occasion to resume the subject, and treat certain parts of it in greater detail. In the mean time, however, we indulge the hope that the hints we have thrown out—should they meet the approbation of competent judges—may excite others to reflection, and thus produce, indirectly, results more valuable than any which we could expect to draw from them ourselves.

It will be seen at once, from the tone and spirit of our remarks, that in contesting some of the leading principles of Mr. Stewart, it has not been our intention to depreciate his reputation, or diminish the general respect for his talents and character. We consider the tendency of his writings as eminently favorable to the great cause of truth and virtue, and can therefore recommend them with perfect confidence to the perusal of our readers. They are admirably fitted by their eloquent and attractive style, to inspire a taste for the high and interesting sciences which form their subject; nor are they the less valuable for this purpose, because the opinions of the author are not to be received in every point with implicit credit. While the beauty of the language and illustrations induces us to read, the questionable character of some of the principles induces us to think, and we thus obtain a double advantage; since it is only by learning to think for ourselves, and exercising this power, that we can really turn to any useful account our study of the thoughts of others. While we part with regret from a writer, whose name has never been mentioned among us for many years past without being accompanied by expressions of respect and gratitude, we rejoice that so much of the rich fruit of his fine taste and understanding will survive him in his works. We flatter ourselves that the stock will be increased by a judicious selection from his un-

published manuscripts, and shall embrace, with great delight, any future opportunity that may be offered us of again bestowing the feeble tribute of our applause upon the labors of one who will ever be remembered and admired as an eloquent writer, a powerful thinker, a wise, learned, amiable, and good man.

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ART. XI.—*The New Testament in the Common Version, Conformed to Griesbach's Standard Greek Text.* Boston. GRAY & BOWEN. 1830.

In our fifteenth volume, we gave some account of the leading editions of the Greek New Testament, adding our favorable testimony to what has been contributed from all quarters, to the work of Dr. Griesbach; a critic, who,—in the circumstance that the principal emendations which he introduced, were thought not of a character to support his own theological system,—had a peculiar advantage for recommending his judgment to general confidence, and its results to an impartial estimation. We had occasion to remark, that what has hitherto borne the name of the Received Edition, was an anonymous compilation from previous impressions, themselves mainly derived from two sources; viz. the Greek Testament of the Complutensian Polyglot, prepared from manuscripts not now known, but which all the evidence, accessible on the subject, ascertains to have been modern and of little authority; and that of Erasmus, who possessed but four manuscripts, besides the text presented in a commentary by a father of the eleventh century. Of these manuscripts, one only was of the whole New Testament; the other three were respectively of the Gospels, of the Acts and Epistles, and of the Apocalypse. Of the first of these, which was ancient, dating perhaps from the tenth century, little use appears to have been made. The third, and especially the second, were modern, and of little critical worth. The fourth is now lost; it was so imperfect, that Erasmus was forced to supply chasms—in one instance to the extent of six verses—by his own translation from the Latin Vulgate. In less than nine months from the time when his work was undertaken, it had passed through the press, along with notes, and a Latin translation of the whole, the editor also giving meanwhile a great part of his atten-